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MERRYBANKS

AND HIS

NEIGHBOR.

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THIS IS A NEW BOOK BY

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MERRYBANKS AND HIS NEIGHBOR.

SOME PICTURES FROM REAL LIFE OF A BEE-KEEPER.

TELLING MR. MERRYBANKS' FAILURES AS WELL AS HIS ULTIMATE SUCCESS AFTER HAVING PROFITED BY PAST EXPERIENCE.

ILLUSTRATING THE OBSERVATION OF JOSH BILLINGS,

"*Egsperiens teaches a good skule, but the tuishun is rather hi.*"

ILLUSTRATED BY MANY ENGRAVINGS.

MEDINA, OHIO:
A. I. ROOT,
1886.

DEDICATORY.

This little book is respectfully dedicated to the juveniles who have contributed to the pages of GLEANINGS IN BEE CULTURE during the past few years, and also to those who may, in years to come, come into our homes with eyes and ears ready for every thing that is curious as well as for any thing that is funny. While writing it, Uncle Amos had them all specially in mind; and with the hope that it will help them to avoid accidents and mishaps in bee culture as well as in all other pursuits in life, the little book is respectfully handed over to them as their property.

A. I. ROOT.

Medina, O., July, 1886.

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INTRODUCTION.

The idea of writing these papers was suggested by reading hundreds and thousands of letters from those who have, at different times in the past fifteen or twenty years, taken up bee culture. The various mishaps that have been strung through many letters have been collected and put into book form, and the author has taken the liberty of giving them as the experience of a single individual. The objection may be made to our character, Mr. Merrybanks, that he has not only made wonderful improvement in a short space of time, but that he has also grown younger-looking as time passes on; to which I reply, that bee culture, the free open air, and the sunshine of God's love, have made *my* heart happier and younger while these years have been passing while I have held such pleasant relations with many bee-friends scattered far and wide; and these pages are given with a prayerful hope that they may not only help the friends in their out-door pursuits, but that it may turn their thoughts to the great Father who has given us pure air, the bright clouds, blue sky, and this wonderful world so full of animated life.

How manifold are thy works, O God!—PSALM 104:24.

MERRYBANKS AND HIS NEIGHBOR.

A STORY FROM REAL LIFE, ILLUSTRATED BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST.

CHAPTER I.

MR. MERRYBANKS, having read "Blessed Bees," has become enthusiastic on the subject of bee culture. As he has all his life considered that "the best is the cheapest," he decides to have nothing to do with "dollar queens," but he sends $7.50 for an imported queen in the month of April. She comes to hand all right, and he contemplates her markings and general appearance with much satisfaction.

MR. MERRYBANKS CONTEMPLATES HIS QUEEN, RIGHT FROM SUNNY ITALY.

He goes to his apiary (consisting of one hive), and proceeds to introduce her. While making the necessary preparation, he builds some air castles filled with imaginary swarms of bees, the progeny of this same golden queen, and pictures to

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himself the satisfaction he will take in seeing them increase and prosper, under his indefatigable care. He also thinks of the pride he will take in showing his queen to his friends, Jones and Brown, when they come round some evening to see how his strawberries, tomatoes, etc., prosper.

After the lapse of 48 hours he proceeds to open the hive and release her; but, to his dismay, instead of going down among the combs she takes wing and soars aloft in the balmy air.

AS HE SEES HER RISE HIGHER AND HIGHER AT EVERY CIRCUIT SHE MAKES, HE THINKS OF HIS $7.50.

He also thinks of several other things, and wonders if it would not have been well to have used a cheaper queen until he had had a little more practice, and resolves that, if he ever gets hold of her again, he will take the scissors and spoil her "flying apparatus," even if it does mar her "fair proportions."

CHAPTER II.

MR. MERRYBANKS ENLARGES HIS APIARY.

YOU see, our friend has prepared himself well for the work, had his veil all tucked nicely about his neck, his smoker in good trim, and had even tied his trousers about his ankles, that there might be no hindrance from unlucky bees getting the impression that these openings were entrances to hives, and every thing seemed propitious as he started out on a fine May morning filled with the very commendable idea of having *all* his bees on combs of a uniform size.

HIS TRIALS IN TRANSFERRING.

Only a week before, a neighbor had transferred the hives you see over toward the fence, and the whole operation seemed easy and simple. Since then, however, the fruit-bloom had vanished, and he had forgotten the injunction of the A B C book, to beware of trying to do such work when the bees were not gathering honey. As he scattered his combs about, omitting to use a cloth to cover the exposed sweets, as advised in the book, the robbers began very quietly loading up; and be-

fore he knew it, stinging was the order of the day, in a way he had never quite experienced before. His dog, which had, until now, been very much interested in the proceeding, suddenly beat a retreat with a series of quick yelps; next a chicken that chanced to be near started off with alacrity, and finally his friend who was present promised to see him again(?), and bade him "good-day" rather unceremoniously. He used his smoker, but they clung in frenzied rage to his trousers, stinging through, diving into his pockets and down his neck, until he, too, was compelled to retire from the field. While his friend is beating the air furiously at a little distance, an innocent passer-by in the road has started his horse with a wonderful suddenness, and has apparently no intention at all of stopping to recover the hat which he has knocked off, in trying to beat away the bees which have gone over the fence to attack him so furiously, when he "wa'n't doing nothin' at all."

MORAL.—If you don't want your townspeople to vote you and your bees a nuisance, beware how you leave honey carelessly exposed, at a time when bees are gathering nothing.

P. S.—Our engraver says he thinks the man with the bee on his back must have been the minister, but I think he is mistaken.

CHAPTER III.

MR. M. IS STRUCK SUDDENLY WITH A BRIGHT THOUGHT.

LABELING THE QUEEN.

MR. MERRYBANKS is getting along finely since the clover season; but he has so much trouble in finding his queen, he has resolved to paste a label on her back, so he can find her at once. His paste and label are right handy, but, alas! she is nowhere to be found—as usual.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE SUBLIME TO THE RIDICULOUS.

MR. MERRYBANKS' DREAM.

OUR friend Mr. Merrybanks, after having been very busily engaged during the day with his bees, goes to bed at night with bright visions. As he begins to lose himself in the land of slumbers, visions of large fine queens, that he was unable to find during the day, float before his slumbering

senses, and, as they stalk majestically across the combs, while the workers pay homage by standing out of the way and bowing as they pass, he wonders that he ever had so much trouble in finding them. He even sees them as they flit through the air, and, while he gazes admiringly, wonders that any one should refuse to be a bee-keeper.

The scene changes; he is invited to speak at a convention; he waxes eloquent with his theme; and, after a burst of applause from the audience, he winds up by declaring the day not far distant, when our land shall so flow with milk and honey, that even the urchins on the street will go about with a huge dish full, inviting all who will, to partake; and all the enterprising apiarist will have to do will be to carry his nice shipping-cases full of honey to market, on a spring wagon, drawn by a dashing pair of spirited nags, bought with the honey sold, while bees of enlarged dimensions dive into the blossoms of the improved variety of clover that lines the roadside, rifling them of their cups of honey. While——

Hark! what is that sound? He rubs his eyes, and finds it is broad daylight. Bees there are, it is true; and by the sound, he knows at once they must be robbing. They are even making their way through the shutters of his bedroom window. The urchin of his dream had, in truth, slipped into the honey-house the day before, helped himself to the honey, dribbled it along the floor, then scattered it about as he divided it among his mates, and, worst of all, left the door ajar. Alas! alas! thought he, as he nervously pulled on his summer clothing, how true it is, that there *is* but a step between the sublime and the ridiculous, and how different are the stern realities of every-day life from the fine speeches sometimes made! The bees about his bed and hovering over his nose were a reality after all, but they were not *queens*.

CHAPTER V.

MR. MERRYBANKS UNDERTAKES TO SELL HIS HONEY.

IMPENDING BANKRUPTCY.

IT has been said, that a pipe of tobacco is the poor man's solace and comfort. It makes him forget his cares, and tends to make him satisfied with his lot in life, etc.

Our friend Merrybanks, who has entrusted the sale of his honey on commission to one of the above-mentioned individuals, concludes, after a survey of the premises, that he prefers

a man for an agent who does not forget his "cares," and who is *not* satisfied with his "lot in life;" especially when said "lot" comprises the existing "circumstances" shown in the window above, and while his possessions seem so palpably taking "wings to themselves" and flying away.

CHAPTER VI.

LOCATING AN APIARY.

YOU see, Mr. Merrybanks' neighbor thought *he* would keep bees too; and, in spite of Mr. M.'s remonstrances, he would set them up on a bench leaned against the hog-pen.

'MR. MERRYBANKS' NEIGHBOR.

The tragic end of his neighbor's apiary may, we hope, prove a solemn warning to all the A B C class against locating the apiary next to, or anywhere in the immediate vicinity of, the hog-pen.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. MERRYBANKS' TRIALS IN BEE CULTURE—HOW HE SAVED MONEY.

YOU see, our friend, after some sad experience in sending his wax a great way off by express, and paying more money for express charges than the wax was worth, to say nothing of the express on the fdn. back again (he was obliged to do it all by express, because he had small quantities and was always in a hurry for it), finally decides to have a fdn.-mill of his own. The money is scraped up, the mill purchased, directions carefully read over, all needful appliances—wax, starch, etc., procured, and now all that he lacks is a stove on which to melt his wax, and a room for his water, mill, etc. He finally decides to use his wife's cooking-stove, but thinks it will make less trouble to do the work during her absence. As he does not know exactly how it may turn out, he decides to say nothing to her about it.

It seems his wife (as wives often do) returns rather unexpectedly, and the scene that meets her astonished gaze as she opens the door, our artist has tried to depict on the next page. Do not be frightened, my friends; it is not melted wax that the little one has fallen off the table into (our artist would never allow that, for he has a little boy and girl of his own), but only a tub of cold water. It is nothing strange that children of "inquiring minds" should wish to see every thing done; and at our friend's house it seems even the dog and cat are taking a "lively" interest in proceedings; but, if I am right, the dog seems a little undecided as to whether the splash before him was a *bona-fide* part of the programme, or a slight accidental hitch in the machinery. As I was obliged to leave just when the above took place, I really can not say how the husband and wife adjusted matters, nor how many pounds

MR. MERRYBANKS MAKING COMB FOUNDATION.

of fdn. friend M. made that day; but I hope and trust the day ended in tranquillity.

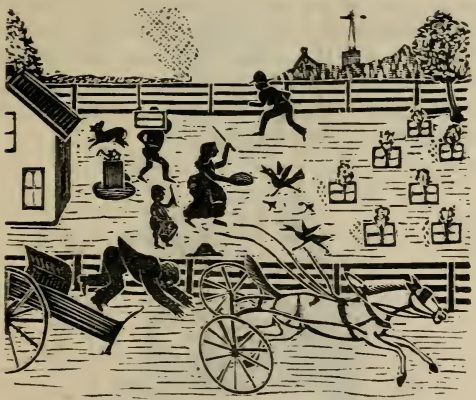
MORAL.—When you go to work with wax, candy, glue, honey. or any thing of the sort, be careful. Accustom yourself, by practice, to handle any of these things without soiling your fingers, or getting a drop on the floor or anywhere else. If you can not work without scattering things all about, do not try to do any such work, but hire somebody to do it for you, and remain poor and helpless all your life. Don't you see how naturally it comes for me to scold? Tell your wife, when any scolding is needed in the family, to just send for me.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOBODY HURT.

ACCORDING to the best information I have, it was another neighbor of friend Merrybanks, who believed in the good old way of a tin-pan serenade, when the bees swarmed. Of course, the queen's wings were not clipped, for that was one of the new-fangled notions, and, as it was an imported queen, from his best swarm, all hands were called to assist. His good wife got the dish-pan, his son George got the drum, and the whole family turned out and did the best they could. The dog, catching the inspiration, joined in with his sonorous voice; the chickens also added their high-keyed notes, and even the neighbors rushed to their doors, and gazed with the usual interest in such proceedings. The oldest boy has got a hive on his shoulder, and, with broad grins, in keeping with the general jubilee, is marching for the bees. Suddenly the swarm rises higher and higher, and finally starts

over the fence for the woods. At this juncture friend Merrybanks arrives, for he had just stepped into his buggy, to drive to the postoffice for GLEANINGS; but hearing the melee, he hastens his horse, perhaps a little excitedly, and, like all the rest, hurries to the scene of action.



"SWARMING TIME."

Alas! alas! His well-trained nag, hearing so much noise and din, with a sudden snort and jump capsizes the wagon, and, as the bees soar away to their leafy home, Mr. M. comes tumbling into the dust.

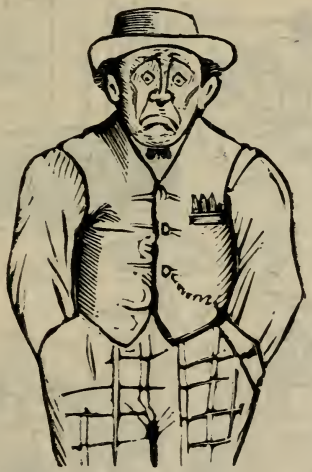
CHAPTER IX.

MR. MERRYBANKS SENDS HIS HONEY TO THE CITY.

OUR friend Merrybanks has succeeded, by getting up early and working hard, in getting a fair crop of honey, although the season has been the poorest ever known. By careful attention, he got each section off the hives as soon as it was nicely sealed over, and before it had got soiled and dark by bees walking over it. After the season had closed he sent samples to several of his friends in the city, asking them to see what offer they could get him for it. Below is his picture after reading one of their replies.

MR. MERRYBANKS READS HIS LETTER.

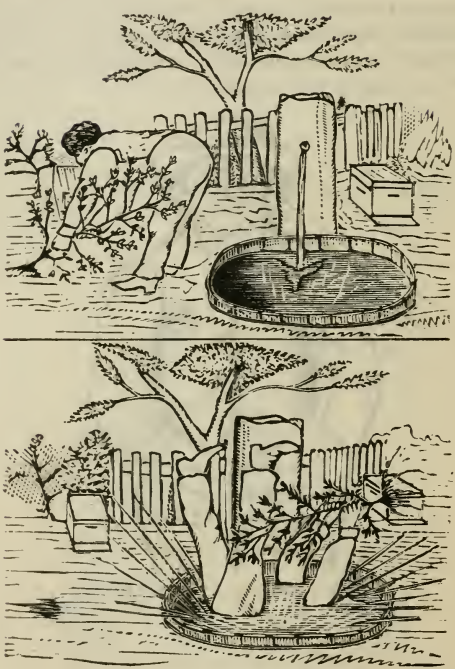
His neighbor who set his bees against the hog-pen (see p. 13) and who does not believe in books and journals, but brimstones his bees every fall, hearing of the good success of friend M.'s crop, gets his honey ready, and sends it to the city without even asking what he will probably get for it. He did not have any letter, but the man who carried it for him has just been in to tell him of the result.



"IT'S TOO BAD, I DECLARE."

CHAPTER X.

AQUA PURA.



"READY FOR THE NEXT ONE."

YOU see, our friend Merrybanks made a very pretty fountain, where his bees could get water conveniently, and he also planted some *Melilotus leucantha* (sweet clover), to furnish honey for his bees. Well, some few stalks were so

near his fountain, that he one day thought he would pull them up, but they did not come very readily. Now, M. is a very resolute man, and not easily baffled, and—he was not this time, either. You see, he pulled it up, and he will soon be ready for the next one.

CHAPTER XI.

MR. MERRYBANKS' SON AND HIS NEIGHBOR'S DAUGHTER.

HOW THE BEES GATHER HONEY.

MASTER MERRYBANKS, after hearing his father talk about the way bees gather honey from the flowers, takes the opportunity of imparting the same startling facts to

the daughter of their next-door neighbor. This neighbor, although a very homely man himself (as you may have observed in Chap. IX.), has a very comely daughter. The hog-pen has been fixed up again, and he has put his bee-hives a little further away. Mr. Merrybanks has also got his buggy fixed, and that truant swarm that went off to the woods in spite of the tin pans, etc., is now contentedly reposing under the foliage of that tree you see in the distance (there *is* a tree in the distance, is there not?). And this reminds me that I have been feeling badly, to think our artist did not give the boy any larger feet; but then, you know boys' feet usually grow some as they get older. Perhaps, next time we see him his feet may be larger.

CHAPTER XII.

OUTDOOR WINTERING.

MR. M. has had his bees all nicely packed up in chaff hives, and put away for some time; but not so with his neighbor. He kept thinking he would get at it before long, all through the fall; but as it began to grow cold, he finally struck upon the bright idea of having the boys do it. They had plenty of time, and so they would be sure to do it all right. His bee-journal had stopped; and so one morning he determined to send on 25 cents and have it started again, so he might see who got into "Blasted Hopes;" and, as he sits down to write the letter, he remembers his own bees. I shall have to explain, that the young people whom we just saw getting acquainted, after they got through discussing the flower, went over to friend Merrybanks', and Freddie finally loaned Mary, the little girl, one of his ten-cent Sunday-school books; and as soon as it was brought into the house, one after another of the

family picked it up and read it through as if they were starving for such bright-looking story-books. Well, John was just then right in the midst of the book (which happened to be "Gutta-percha Willie") and he was deeply interested about that water-wheel Willie made to wake him up mornings.

You remember John as the boy who brought the bee-hive when the bees were swarming. Well, all at once his father looked up and said—

"John, did you fix those bees in a dry-goods box full of chaff, as I told you—the way it said in that last bee-journal?"

"Why, father, I didn't have time that day."

"Well, then, why didn't you do it the next day?"

"Why, it rained the day after."

"And you mean to say that nothing has been done about it after all this time, and the thermometer 8 degrees below zero?"

"Why, you said if they were out of honey I should give them some candy; and mother said there wasn't any sugar to make candy of."

"And so you let them stand without ever looking at them?"

John looked troubled; and as there was nothing to be said, he thought the best thing to do was to say nothing; and so he only hung his head and fumbled the leaves of his book.

JOHN GOING TO FEED THE BEES.

"Well, sir! put down that book, and go this minute and fix up those bees as they should be."

Poor John! All his enjoyment has gone; and as he buttons his scant coat about him, and prepares to brave the elements, he mentally wishes that father wouldn't be so cross, but would come along with him and show him how, and see if the work be well and properly done this cold freezing stormy day in November, and then write his letter for the bee-journal afterward. Poor father! for, as he tries to write his letter, he discovers that he is unhappy too. Just at this crisis friend Merrybanks comes along. But, as this story is getting long, I think I shall have to wait awhile before I tell you how he brought sunshine—yes, sunshine, even when the wind was blowing the snow in at the open door, and the thermometer below zero—to both father and son, on that cold wintry morning.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW FRIEND M. "BROUGHT THE SUNSHINE."

BEFORE going on with my story I shall have to go back a little, to show just why it was that even the sight of friend M.'s good-natured face brought a better feeling to both father and son. You doubtless remember about the swarm that ran away last summer. Well, you remember, too, do you not, how the horse got frightened and broke his buggy, and he came tumbling into the dust?

Well, friend M. picks himself up, not much worse for his sudden stop. Old "Dobbin," as the distance widens between the general commotion and his nag-ship, is not so badly scared as he thought, and is easily caught by a neighbor hurrying to the scene of action.

But the bees—oh, where are they? Sailing away, a mere speck in the blue sky.

Mr. M.'s neighbor is completely discouraged, and as he turns away he says, disconsolately,—

"There! that's just the way with bees; there goes all honey, and profit too, for this year."

Not so with friend Merrybanks, however. His tumble in the dust had in no way abated his zeal, and upon the spur of the moment he burst forth with,—

"They ain't gone, either; we'll follow 'em and bring 'em back. If you don't want to go after them, I'll give you $2.62½ for them up there on the wing, and get them myself."

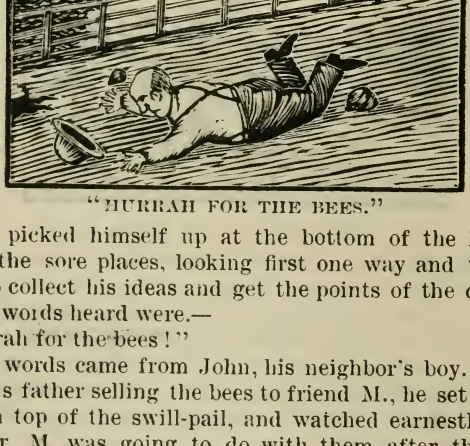
MR. MERRYBANKS AFTER THE BEES.

I confess that it was a little singular that friend M. should offer just the above-named sum, to the splitting of a cent; but as our story proceeds, we shall perhaps find out why he named just that exact amount. As for the bees, no time was to be lost; and as the offer was immediately accepted, he started in pursuit, while his neighbor resumed his occupation of nailing up the hog-pen. Somehow, that hog-pen seemed to need a great amount of fixing to make it so the pigs wouldn't

get out and make a general raid on the neighborhood, every now and then.

Off goes friend M.'s coat and vest; and with his eye on the bees, and his feet anywhere but on solid ground, he starts off down the hill back of the church.

Now, since friend M. has become a bee-keeper, he has improved in health by outdoor exercise, until you would hardly recognize in him the same individual that he was when we first met him. In fact, so robust has he become, that, when his foot hit on a round stone which turned over, he tumbled flat and rolled clear to the bottom of the hill.



"HURRAH FOR THE BEES."

As he picked himself up at the bottom of the hill, and rubbed the sore places, looking first one way and then the other, to collect his ideas and get the points of the compass, the first words heard were.—

"Hurrah for the bees!"

These words came from John, his neighbor's boy. As he heard his father selling the bees to friend M., he set his hive down on top of the swill-pail, and watched earnestly to see what Mr. M. was going to do with them after they were

bought. As he doffed his coat, John viewed the proceedings very intently, and was not slow in following after the decamping swarm. With his light summer clothing, he very soon outran the owner of the bees, and the shout that friend M. heard was occasioned by the sight of the whole swarm of bees upon a leafy limb of one of the highest trees in the woods. John had caught a portion of the bee-fever from our friend M.,

JOHN WITH THE BEES, AFTER CLIMBING THE TREE.

and the fit was on after his exercise of the brisk run. On the impulse of the moment, he climbed a small tree that stood near where the bees were swinging from the end of a limb, and, with a ten-cent jack-knife that friend M. had made him a present of, he cut the limb, slipped carefully down the tree

with his prize, and, by the time Merrybanks had found out where the boys and bees were, he was standing on the ground, the center of an admiring audience (of two), while he held up his prize. Our artist has tried to depict the expression of pride and joy that shone in John's eyes (and mouth (?)) as he held the limb containing that whopping runaway swarm up to view.

Now you know why John and Mr. M. were fast friends, and why just the sight of friend M.'s rosy face and round figure brought relief to John that wintry morning. In the next chapter we will try to tell what happened to that bee-hive John left sitting on the swill-pail, when he started after the bees.

CHAPTER XIV.

FRIEND MERRYBANKS INVENTS A HIVE.

I TOLD you, in the last chapter, that John set the hive down on the swill-pail when the bees started off. Well, the pail was over by the fence, near the hog-pen; and now I think I will tell just how it came to be on that precise spot. They had just finished their dinner, and John's father sat down to smoke a pipe before going out to his work again. While he smoked, he read in his bee-journal; and although he knew it was past the time he should be at his work, he yielded to the temptation to sit a little longer, in spite of the suggestion from his good wife, that he might be needed, until he began to feel decidedly uncomfortable, and just in a mood for finding fault with somebody. As he stepped out of the door he passed John, who was rigging up a box for bee-hunting.

"John, have you fed those pigs this noon?"

Now, John was a very well-meaning boy, and would jump

and run in a minute when his father or mother asked him to do any thing for them: but he had one very sad fault: he could never remember any thing very far ahead. He always would forget to feed those pigs, and it made very little difference whether they squealed loud enough to raise the roof from their pen or not. John never heard them, and rarely remembered to go and feed them, unless told each morning, noon, and night. Perhaps one reason was, that they were almost always squealing, anyhow, and he had got used to it.

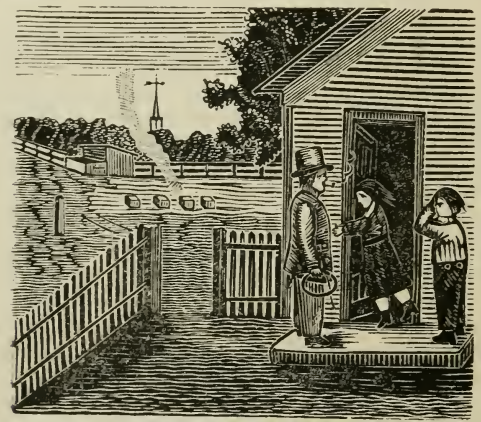
Well, when his father asked the question, he was so used to saying, "Oh! I declare, father, I forgot it," that he said so this time, as a matter of course.

His father was a little out of tune, as you know, and, under the impulse of the moment, he gave him a cut with a halter-strap he had in his hand, saying,—

"There! take that, and learn to remember what you are told."

John went crying after the pail, but it could not be found. Come to think of it, he *did* feed the pigs after all, promptly, just before dinner, and there stood the pail, over near the pen, just where he had left it. So he came back to his father, rubbing his eyes, with the humiliating confession that he was not derelict in duty, but forgot to mention the circumstance in time to avert the clip with the halter-strap. As John looked up at his father, and his father looked down at him, the situation was a little embarrassing for both parties. John loved and respected his father, in spite of his sometimes harsh ways, and always enjoyed being with him in any work or play. The father also loved his boy in his way; and as he stood there, with the traces of tears on his cheeks, he recalled to mind how very dutiful John had always been. In fact, there wasn't a better boy anywhere around than his boy John, as he had often said, if it were not for his awful propensity to forget every commission, seemingly, that anybody entrusted to

his care. Scolding did not seem to help the matter any, for he forgot again, almost before the words were out of his ears. I am a little inclined to think the father was then remembering how *he* used to forget, too, when a boy, and how earnest, kind words seemed to lift him up and make him strong, more than any amount of scolding. Should he confess to his boy that he had been hasty? and would he not think less of a father who should so humble himself? Is it really well to "own up" to your boy when you have done wrong? As the father meditated upon the consequences of weakening the boy's confidence in his wisdom and fitness to stand in the position of father, he also thought within himself, "Oh that I could learn to be more careful, and to have perfect command over that temper of mine!" He did not think, "God be merciful to *me* a sinner," but it seems to me it amounted to almost that.

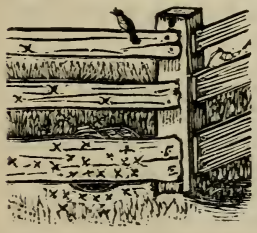


JOHN AND HIS FATHER.

"Papa! John! The bees are swarming! don't you see

them?" It was little Mary's voice; and, sure enough, the bees *were* swarming. The particulars of the event you have had already.

Well, after John got back from the woods with his bees still clustered on the limb, he gave them to friend Merrybanks to hold, while he went after the hive left sitting on the pail. The pail was over near the fence, and as the hive was lifted off of it, some stiff grass and weeds underneath it raised up so much as to upset it, and it rolled over against the board fence. Now, the bottom board of the fence was a rather broad one; and as the pail rolled against it, it fell with its mouth against this board in such a way that the pail was all closed, except a small opening at the lower edge. The picture will show you just how the pail lay against the fence.



THE NOVEL BEE-HIVE.

After the weeds had risen up back of the pail, it was obscured from view so effectually from the inside of the fence that no one would ever have thought of there being a pail there; and, in truth, neither John nor his father ever did find the pail. After the excitement of bringing the bees home, John was not even as good as usual at remembering, and so it never occurred to him that the pail was down in the weeds just where it tipped over when he lifted the hive up. After he and his father had both hunted for it in vain, they gave it up; and when the latter went down to the grocery in the evening to get some more "tobacker," he bought a new pail.

Now, one great reason why John's father was a poor man was, that he seldom took care of his tubs, pails, etc. When a hoop tumbled off it was seldom put back and fastened; but the utensils and tools were mostly left out in the sun and

rain until they fell in pieces, and then new ones were bought as a matter of course. His plea was, that it was more expensive to fix and fuss with old things than to buy new ones outright. Mr. Merrybanks did not agree with him, and they had often talked over the subject. Mr. M. even went so far as to make a new stave for a bucket, rather than to throw it away; and his plea was, that even if it was more expensive than to pay 15 cents for a new pail, it got one into the way of stopping things from going to pieces, and thus saving outlays to the amount of many dollars in a year. It was the same way with the tinware. A good tin pail at John's father's would often have the bottom rusted out in about two months, because the water was left standing in it, or it was left with just a little in, without being wiped out and turned over. Now, Mrs. Merrybanks had a way of taking care of her tinware, that I think I shall have to tell you about. She did not buy the thickest tin pails and dish-pans, because she did not want heavy utensils to handle; but before each article was put to use, it was warmed slightly, and a little clean lard rubbed into all the seams with a soft rag. This was then rubbed off with another clean portion of cloth, and the operations repeated at intervals, according to the way in which the article was to be used. The tin water-pail was thus dried and "greased" inside about once in a week or ten days, and the effect was such that the pail had been in use for years, and the bottom was not rusted even then. Mr. Merrybanks treated his sap-pails the same way; and, even though they were made from light tin, they were bright and clean after years of service.

Now, a few days after that great swarming time we have mentioned, Mary and Freddie were at play in the lot adjoining. This lot was one where cattle were allowed to pasture, and the grass was eaten down closely. As they passed along opposite the spot where that unlucky pail tipped over, Freddie exclaimed,—

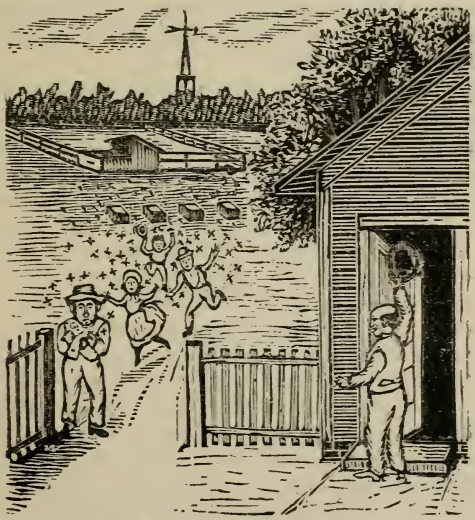
"Why! look'e here? Here are bees going out and in under the old board of this fence."

"They must be bumble-bees," suggested Mary, "and they have got a nest under there, I'll bet you."

"I'll bet you they ain't bumble-bees," said Freddie; "I guess I know bumble-bees when I see them, and these are real honey-bees like my papa's."

"Well, I know they *are* bumble-bees, for honey-bees don't ever go down into holes in the ground and grass as these do. My pa has got honey-bees too, just as well as yours."

John, hearing the dispute from where he was trying in vain to dig up the great weeds that had nearly swamped the pota-



ARE THEY BUMBLE-BEES OR HONEY-BEES?

toes, came to hear what it was about. Both children called out at once,—

"Say, John, ain't these bumble-bees?"

"Say, John, ain't these honey-bees?"

At this, John clambered over the fence; but the fence was poor and shaky, like the general surroundings; and as he jumped down, the fence was shaken so violently that all hands soon had a pretty fair prospect of knowing the disposition if not the kind of bees that inhabited that old pail and were pouring out from under the fence in a way that meant only "business." Discussion was dropped with a unanimity that would have done *credit* to a bee-convention, and all hands cut for the house, laughing and screaming. Whom should they run against, as they turned the corner of the house, but Mr. Merrybanks, as jolly and rosy as he was when we last saw him rolling down the hill?

Friend M. hustled the children into the house, and the bees, after buzzing about the door awhile, buzzed back to their pail hive. Mary had a bee or two tangled in her flying hair, but these friend M. got out quietly without even a sting, and John was the only one who was stung at all. The bees that got out of Mary's hair, when found on the window, proved to be one-banded hybrids. Friend M. lighted a chunk of rotten wood, and, after rigging out the different members of the family with sundry veils, the whole party cautiously approached the pail bee-hive. A little smoke was blown in at the entrance, and friend M. carefully turned the pail so that a view could be had of the inside. Sure enough, there was a good colony. They had evidently built the first comb parallel with the bottom of the pail, and the next one right by its side, and so on. The queen had commenced her brood in the center, and circled around, so that their stores were above and at the sides. All were loud in their praises of these beautiful "wheels" of honey-comb and honey, except friend M. He stood with his

smoking chunk of rotten wood in his hand, and gazed as if spellbound. Mary first broke the silence:—

"I guess pa is studying up a patent bee-hive made out of pails; don't you think he is?"

At this, John grabbed hold of friend M.'s other hand and exclaimed, "O Mr. M.! Mr. M.! It'll be half mine, won't it, 'cause I invented it when I lost the swill-pail?"

At this sally there was a loud laugh all around, and even John's mother joined in, while she suggested that he would certainly make a great inventor some day, if every thing he lost or forgot turned out like the pail bee-hive. Little did any of the parties dream, that morning, that this same little incident, or perhaps accident, was eventually to make such a stir, not only throughout all Onionville, for that was the name of the place, but clear out into the outside world as well. As Mr. Merrybanks has promised us a description of the Wooden-Pail-Cracker-Barrel bee-hive, belonging to himself and John, for next chapter, I think I won't tell you any more about it now. It winters bees perfectly (even if they haven't a drop of honey), and costs only—see next chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEW BEE-HIVE THAT ALWAYS KEEPS THE BEES FREE FROM DYSENTERY.

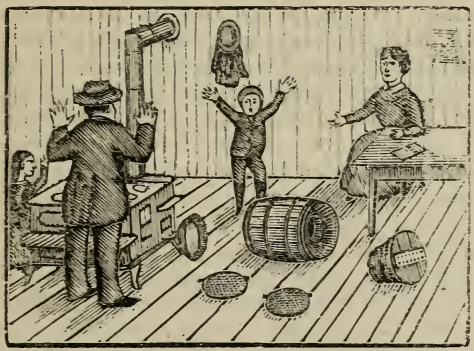
YOU see, I was a little afraid there might be a dispute, some time, as to who was the *real* inventor, and so I have taken several chapters to go over the whole story of the incidents that led to the great discovery.

Well, when friend Merrybanks came up to the door, that

cold, stormy morning, just as John was going out to see to those bees (see Chap. XII.), he carried something in his arms that John immediately recognized as the new bee-hive. Of course, the sight of this brought sunshine, for friend M. was always a welcome visitor; and as he came up, the door was open wide for him to bring in the wonderful structure. John's mother, with a smiling face (for she too had been lifted through her trials and discouragements more than once by our genial friend) moved out the table, so that, as the hive rested on it, all could have a view from all sides. Well, this hive, to all external appearance, was nothing more nor less than an ordinary cracker-barrel, with the exception that in one end was an auger-hole; but even this is so common in barrel-heads that probably none but John would have noticed that a tube of wood just reached out through it, flush with the head of the barrel. This tube was so near the chime of the barrel that the end of the stave under it would have made a very fair, though perhaps narrow, alighting-board. John took in all these points while friend M. was warming his hands at the stove and making inquiries about Mary, who had had a spell of the croup. As the wind whistled without, and sent cool breezes through the cracks of the house, friend M. was asking if the house had been properly banked up, that the children might not be exposed to these chilly drafts; and as he did so he glanced down at the floor, which seemed neither very tight nor very warm underneath.

Just at this point John had concluded his investigations far enough to decide, within his own mind, what the contents of this mysterious barrel were: and so elated was he with the idea, that he began dancing up and down, boylike, in token of his approval of the bee-hive. Well, this same floor that friend M. was considering, was hardly equal to such demonstrations. You see, when John's father had the floor laid, the centers of the sleepers were supported on blocks of wood set on end. I

do not know why he was so thoughtless as to use blocks when stone would have cost but little more time and trouble; but so he did, and these blocks had lasted just about five years, when the lower ends were rotted off. Well, John's jumping seemed to give just the right-timed vibrations to set the room all in a teeter, and of course the barrel began to roll; and before any one knew it, it had rolled off on the floor. As it did so, one head came out; and with the head, out tumbled a queer-looking cushion and a wooden bowl, filled with some white substance that John rightly interpreted to be bee-candy. While John is eagerly taking in all of the features of this great hive, I think we will take a peep over his shoulder and see too.



FRIEND M. AND HIS HIVE AS IT ROLLED OFF ON THE FLOOR.

Away back in the barrel he saw that identical pail that we saw, in the last chapter, down by the fence. You see, the bees, being a late swarm, had starved out in October, and deserted the hive; and as friend M. had asked for it, it was of course given him. The pail was put in just about the center of the barrel, and all was then filled in and around with

packed chaff. The chaff was kept in place by burlap or bagging tacked from the edge of the pail to the edge of the barrel. To the head of the barrel was tacked a burlap cushion that just filled the cavity. The wooden bowl filled with candy was only for wintering, and for giving destitute colonies all the stores they would need for winter at one "dose." The entrance was a wooden tube with a one-inch hole, and it reached from the bottom of the pail to the opposite end of the barrel. The combs were made movable by cutting out each carefully, as built by the bees in the pail, and putting them in a little light hoop made of basswood, steamed and bent, and left on a form until dry, that they might be perfect circles. On opposite sides of the pail was tacked a light tin rabbet; and an arm of tin, similar to those on the metal-cornered frames, was tacked to the opposite sides of the wooden hoops.

After the pieces were gathered up and placed on the table, and John was placed "under bonds" not to jump any more, at least until the floor had been fixed, his mother, who did not usually say very much, was the first to break the silence.

"Am I correct in thinking you expect the bees to winter better in such a hive, because they will be more nearly in the form of a sphere, something as they are in the old straw hive, or a hollow tree?"

"That is just the point exactly, my friend; and when the queen commences to rear brood she starts in circles in the center of the comb; and as these circles enlarge, the bees find a close, warm inclosure all about them, instead of cold corners full of nooks and crannies for the heat of the hive to be constantly escaping."

Here Mr. Merrybanks began feeling first in one pocket and then in the other, as if he suddenly remembered something. Pretty soon he brings out a letter, and, as he unfolds it, remarks,—

"The idea is by no means new, for the Germans have for

years used a hive with a round roof to it, the frames of which could be taken out only by turning the hive over.* On the isle of Cyprus, the natives use hives of a cylindrical shape,† and here is the letter I was trying to find, from one of our friends in Scotland, as you will see," and Mr. M. read as follows from a letter that had a drawing of an octagonal frame on it:—

I find the queen commences in the spring to lay in a circle, and does not go near corners for a long time. One apiary here is nearly all as above, and the owner says they breed much better in spring than on square frames. ANDREW PRATT.

Link's Schoolhouse, Kirkaldy, Scotland.

John's father, who had been listening eagerly, here interposed,—

"Would not that wooden bowl full of candy winter a swarm of bees that had just empty combs and no stores at all?"

Very likely he was thinking of that swarm out of doors, probably in just that predicament; John's mother replied,—

"But the candy would need flour in it, unless they had pollen in their combs."

"I am not so sure of that," replies friend M.; "in fact, late developments seem to imply that, if we can keep pollen away from the bees, so as to hinder brood-rearing, until about the time they would get it from natural sources, we are really better off;" and again he begins fumbling in his pockets. It is one of friend M.'s peculiarities, that he is almost always looking for something somewhere in his pockets. He almost always finds it, though, and so he did in this case. He has loaned me the letters, so I can easily give them here, you see.

POLLEN, AND ITS RELATION TO DYSENTERY AND SPRING DWINDLING.

I think what makes bees have the dysentery, is eating pollen in cold weather. I have been looking at my bees to-day. They were covered up in the snow. The first swarm I shoveled out was the one that made the

* See *Gleanings in Bee Culture* for the year 1876, p. 237; also p. 67, Vol. V.

† See *Gleanings in Bee Culture*, p. 216, Vol. VIII.

most honey last season. The bees had melted a large place around the entrance. Oh what a mess! Two quarts of dead bees out there, and they had "painted" the front of the hive. I don't like the color, the smell, nor the way they put it on. I remember this colony had a large lot of pollen in their frames last fall. I took a look at a swarm to which I fed good clear honey, so they could not get any pollen. They are in splendid condition. The entrance is clean and dry as in summer. I went to another hive from which I had taken frames of pollen, and replaced with clear honey. I found them in a good healthy condition. Other swarms that I knew had too much pollen have got the dysentery.

Two years ago last fall I fed a swarm with sugar syrup. I stirred in some flour with it. They had the dysentery before spring. I fed another colony the clear syrup, and it wintered nice and didn't want to fly during the winter. I have come to this conclusion, that pollen is very bad stuff for bees to eat in the winter; but frames of pollen and honey to give the bees the first of April or last of March is just what I want.

When I find swarms raising brood in Feb., I set them down as worthless. They are sure to stop and then dwindle. If I can keep my bees from raising brood until the first of April, and keep them in a healthy condition, they are all right for a large crop of honey when it comes. My bees are packed in chaff. E. A. ROBINSON.

Exeter, Maine.

"But," says John, "where are you going to put the honey-boxes when our hives get full of bees, and honey is coming in 'like split'?" Here his mother gave him a gentle tweak on the ear, just in play, you know, for using the slang phrase, "like split," and friend M. replied as follows:—Come to think, I don't believe I'll tell what he said until next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOMETHING MORE ABOUT HIVES AND HONEY.

"THIS hive," says Mr. Merrybanks, "is not intended to be used so much for getting surplus honey as for furnishing bees by the pound, and rearing queens for

the market, etc. However, when a heavy yield of honey comes, and it becomes desirable to have it stored in a shape proper for table use, we will take full combs built on nice clean foundation, and when they are nicely capped over we will set them aside, either for table use, or for the use of colonies that need such aid in the fall. These circular cakes of honey can be laid on a plate, and cut up as we cut up an ordinary pie, giving the children, of course, a smaller slice than the older ones, lest they get sick by having too much sweets." Here friend M. gave a glance at Mary, who sat over by the stove, coughing from the effects of her bad cold. "Should the colony get very strong," resumed friend M., "and show no signs of swarming, we will put another pail right up against this one, placing the mouths of both close together. Now, there will be two ways of getting surplus honey in this second pail. One is to attach foundation to the side, in such a way as to have the bees build the pail full of solid honey, the combs running from the bottom to the top, so that when the pail is carried by the handle, in the usual way, there will be little danger of the combs breaking down."

SURPLUS HONEY FROM THE PAIL BEE-HIVE.

"But what will prevent the queen from rearing brood in this second pail, and your having brood and pollen in it instead of a pail full of pure honey?" suggested John's mother.

"Oh," said Mr. M., "we can easily manage that by putting a separator of perforated tin or zinc between the two pails. This bucket of honey, you know, will be easily carried to market; and even if a little should leak out there will be no dripping, for the pail will hold honey just as well as water. A round pane of glass can be put over the pail to keep out dust and insects. By the way, this round pane of glass can also be used to close the mouth of the hive, so as to make a very pretty observatory bee-hive, for timid people. In this case we should

need to sew a sort of cushion around the edges, so as to make the glass fit bee-tight, and also keep in the warm air of the hive."

At this juncture, John's father pulled out his pipe and began feeling in his pockets for tobacco and matches. Whenever he had an idea in his head to which he wanted to give utterance, he instinctively began to seek for that self-same pipe. Friend M. saw the motion, and so pleasantly shook his head at him that he put the pipe back in his pocket. Of course, his neighbor never presumed to dictate in such matters, but he had such a pleasant, kind, good-natured way of reminding one of a failing, that the two were never any the less frends, even though they were not alike in many of their ways and habits. He knew that his wife very much disliked to have him smoke indoors also, and so he very pleasantly put the pipe back in his pocket, and proceeded to criticise the new hive without it.

Friend M. took a chair and sat down, for he was well aware that the soundest and most sensible criticisms would come from John's father, for he was, despite his many shiftless and dilatory ways, a man of good practical common sense, and one who might easily have been a man of means and influence had it not been for some failings of his, and his love of the companionship of a class who were really his inferiors. He commences,—

"But, neighbhor M., even for rearing bees and queens, you have got to take out all the frames before you can get at the last one, and you have not only got to put each one back in its exact place every time, but you have got to put each comb the same side to the front as well. Is this so?"

"Exactly so."

"And is not this a great objection?"

"On the contrary, it is just what I think we need to do to make the most bees and honey."

"Why, then, do you not go back to the old straw hive, or hollow gum, and be done with it?"

"I would go back to the straw hive, or something pretty nearly like it, if the combs were movable. Now just look a minute. To say nothing of the advantage of these round combs to retain the animal heat, we will consider a little the way many of the movable combs are used. Hives are made to open easily, nowadays, and with the modern smokers it is easy to open a hive safely any time we wish. Well, a beginner gets a hive of bees, and proceeds to open up the brood-nest some cool day in April. He gets the combs all out, finds the queen, turns the combs, many of them, end for end, throwing a patch of unsealed brood right opposite a cold cake of honey, or some empty cells that the bees had not yet covered with their cluster. Perhaps he thinks to put the combs back in the same order they were before, and perhaps he does not. May be, as he has read that an empty comb should be placed in the center to give the queen empty cells in which to put in eggs, he purposely divides the brood-nest. As the combs had been built by the bees, or at least trimmed and lengthened out so as to give just room for the bees to pass and do their work (letting an elevation on one fill the depression in the next, etc.), when they are swung around and replaced, the bees have all this work to do over again. Very likely, if one should look carefully after the hive was closed, he would find great empty hollows left between some of the combs, and bulges pushed right into some comb, in another place. In the latter case, perhaps a dozen poor little bees were mashed into the next comb.* Well, this is not the worst of it. Bees have a wonderful tact for economy of steps in the working season. They put the new pollen for the young unsealed brood right in the cells opposite, that the nurses may have the food right where

*I have found bees thus imprisoned, and still alive, on opening a hive four days after it had been hastily closed by the careless owner.—PUB.

it is needed. Where you find a comb of unsealed larvæ you will often see the comb opposite to it one solid mass of pollen-filled cells; and if a couple of rainy days ensue, this pollen will be all used in an almost incredibly short space of time. Now, what will be the effect of interposing a comb just here, or of placing this great wall of pollen off to some other part of the hive? Madam, what would you say?" Here friend M. jumps up and turns to John's mother,—

"What would you say if some one should come into your house some ironing-day, and put your cook-stove over in the lot across the way, your basket of clothes up stairs, and your ironing-table down cellar, and tell you to go on with your work that way, for modern science had shown that more and better work could be done thus? Now, this is not exaggerated. As we look over the journals, we fall to wondering why it is that beginners make such awful work of wintering, while the old hands winter their hundreds, losing not to exceed 5 per cent, and some not even a colony. Is it not rather a wonder that they succeed in getting colonies through the summer, even?"

Here our friend wiped his face with a large red handkerchief, and began feeling in his pockets for something he wanted. While he was hunting, John stepped backward, and, striking his heels against the wooden bowl that had not yet been placed on the table, fell over into it, and split it into several pieces, leaving the candy in nice shape to give that poor colony out of doors.

John's mother was perhaps the most troubled one of the party, at this his second accident, and commenced a most humble apology; but friend M. stopped her by saying he was more than half glad it was broken, for the bees would have built an empty comb in the bowl, and that, on the whole, he preferred a division-board with a cushion around the edge, with a good stout handle attached, so it could be pushed into the hive with a sort of revolving motion, making so tight a fit

that no part of the warm air of the hive could get out, to say nothing of leaving cracks or channels where bees can get through. Here he fished from one of his pockets a copy of the *British Bee-Journal*, giving some of friend Abbot's ideas about working with hives and combs. Here is what friend M. read to his little audience :—

WHAT TO DO, AND WHEN AND HOW TO DO IT.—INCREASING THE BROOD-NEST.

Under the influence of stimulative feeding in hives in which the bees have been crowded together by the dividing-board, the breeding will go on so rapidly that every available cell will be occupied with eggs and larvæ before there has been time for young bees to come into life, and, acting upon impulse, amateurs will be apt to enlarge the nest to give further liberty to the queen to deposit more eggs and cause more brood to be created. In this matter we would advise extreme caution. Bees that are well able to maintain life-supporting heat for themselves and the brood (for the brood generates comparatively little and needs the presence of bees) in, say, three frames of comb, may find a difficulty in cold weather in generating sufficient for a fourth frame, and its introduction would probably do mischief. We would, therefore, refrain from adding the fourth until the population has begun to increase and the chief of the brood approaches maturity, and then we would place the added empty comb by the side of it *pro tem.* Many writers advise that the comb in question should be placed between those containing brood, which advice is sound when the weather is sufficiently mild to preclude danger, but in early days we would prefer that the bees indicate sufficiency of strength to take charge of it (by commencing to breed in it) before we would force its absolute care upon them by giving it a central place. Bee-management is like playing a game of draughts or chess—it may be very easy to make a dozen moves, but it is stupidly absurd to move at all without considering what is likely to happen afterward.

"There!" exclaimed he, after he had finished, "that is what I call good sound sense. Now I want to tell you some of my ideas about feeding." But, friends, as our story is getting long, I think we will listen to the feeding part next time.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A CHAPTER THAT TELLS SOMETHING ABOUT GETTING DISCOURAGED IN BUSINESS AND GIVING UP.

PERHAPS some of the friends would like to know why the town in which Mr. Merrybanks and his neighbor lived was called Onionville. Well, I have thought, for some time, I should like to tell you the story; and as there is a good moral in it that seems to be quite in season just now, I think I will tell it.

Near the site of the town there lay a tract of low swampy lands that had never produced any thing but wild swamp-grass, and was considered by all of no particular value for *any* purpose. Finally, some eccentric youth took it into his head that, by a system of underdraining, etc., this land could be so reclaimed as to raise good crops. This piece of foolishness, so the neighbors said, he got from some papers or books, or some other like impracticable nonsense on which he had been wasting his time, when he would have been better employed at work like the rest of them. He did not argue the point with them much, but very quietly went to work and tried the matter on a small scale; and, as luck would have it, his first venture was on onions. The crop was excellent, and the demand good; but he still kept quiet, although he did a vast amount of thinking, and studied those foolish books and papers more than ever before. The next season he had his plans matured and ready for business. He rented at a very moderate sum perhaps five acres of this swamp land, and with a force of picked men he went to work letting off the surplus water by means of open ditches. Every thing seemed to favor him, and in due season rows of bright green onions, as straight as the streets of a city, rose up before the astonished

gaze of the people; and the clean culture, with the bright green contrasting against the background of the black soil, made a sight that was worth going miles to behold; and, in fact, people did go miles just to see the beautiful sight. Did they all give up and admit there was something in book-farming after all?

Well, some did, and a great many did not. Some who knew from experience what a crop of onions might be expected from a growth as was there before their eyes, declared that the whole United States could not consume so many, and that his crop would bring them down so that onions would not be 10 cents a bushel. Our friend still kept quiet; for, in fact, he could not afford to waste valuable time in argument. He just minded his own business. In due time the bulbs began to show themselves; and when the crop was beginning to ripen, he was still on the ground, curing them and preparing them for market in the best manner. Not a weed had been allowed to grow on the whole plat, and the sight was almost as grand in the fall as it was in June and July. Where in the world will he put them all? In due time they found out. With wagon-loads of boards about a foot square, and like loads of cheap lath, the same hands that cared for the growing plants, in a twinkling reared pyramids of cheap boxes, or shipping-crates, and soon the enormous crop of over 2000 bushels was not only safely shipped to a distant city, but a sudden demand for a nice article of onions so turned things in his favor that they sold for about $3000 00 cash, and our hero was owner of the whole tract of land, and had money in bank besides. Onions, onions, onions, was the cry everywhere, and the next year everybody went to raising onions. Losing sight of the fact that our friend had not only secured the very best ground for the crop, but had put his whole life, soul, and *brains* into it, they expected to do likewise. I need not tell you how they failed; you have, most of you, seen it.

They were too lazy to pay the price of the crop that he paid for his. Now, the saddest part of it comes yet. The next year he went to work to do the same thing over again. Of course he could do it again, if he had been all through it, and had done it once. But he didn't. I do not know whether it was that so much success had spoiled him, or whether it was accident that had favored him so much the first year; but I do know that, as I drove past his place in the fall of the next year, I saw him idly sitting on an empty basket in the middle of his field, with a single hand with him, and this hand was also sitting down on the rich black soil, doing nothing. The onions had failed in a great many places; and where they had not, they were small in size—some of them not larger than a hickory-nut. Worst of all, the ground was covered with weeds. Our friend, a young man just in the prime of life, looked like the fellow in the cut on the next page. All his enterprise and energy were gone. Could it really be my friend of the year before?

I got out of my buggy, and went over into the field. Said I, "Boys, why do you not gather these onions, and get them off to the market?"

"They are so small it won't pay; besides, they won't bring over 25 cents a bushel."

"Why, my friend, 25 cents a bushel is better than nothing. Fix them up nice and send them off."

He laughed a sort of sickly smile, crumbled some dirt in his fingers, and sat there in misery. Of course, he was in misery. Anybody is who sits down on the bottom of an empty basket and says, "It won't pay."

I plucked a little one, and rubbed the skin off. It was beautifully white and nice, and all at once it came into my head that these were exactly the thing for the little onion pickles we buy so often at the groceries.

"Look here, my friend, you can save yourself yet by making

"IT WON'T PAY."

these small onions into pickles. I have paid 40 cents for a quart bottle of them over and over again, and if you will just work the thing up you can make as good pickles as any one."

"I haven't any bottles."

"But you can get bottles at a little expense. There is plenty of time for you to put up some samples. Take them or send them around and get orders." And as I saw the acres of nice small onions scattered about, it seemed to me as if I would like no better fun than to go into this pickle business. But he didn't; and I have since heard that he has become a bankrupt and gone to Texas. The success of that one season has very likely ruined him for life.

Well, now you know how Mr. Merrybanks came to live in Onionville.

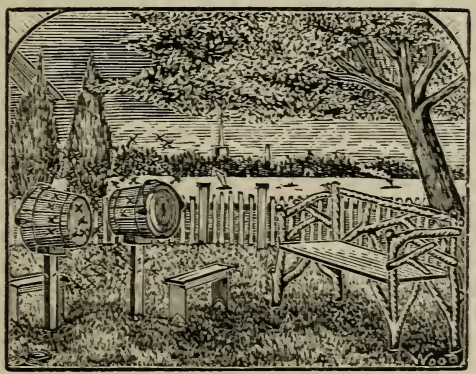
Well, Mr. Merrybanks wintered his 25 colonies with the loss of only two. His neighbor wintered 20 colonies, and *saved* only two. More than that, he was out of work, and had been for some months. While brooding over his misfortune of being out of work, and almost out of bees too, he smoked almost incessantly; and his tobacco-bill was getting to be quite a little item, especially where there was no income. His good wife took in washing when she could get it; helped some of the near neighbors to clean house during the pleasant spring months; sewed carpet-rags, and did every thing she could think of to keep up appearances, and have John and Mary at least half-way presentable when they went to Sabbath-school over at the little church, and hoped and prayed for better things. Yes, prayed for better things. She had never belonged to any church, for in her childhood she had hardly known what want was. Years had made many changes. She was far away from her former home and friends. None seemed to care for her or their family particularly, unless it was kind-hearted Merrybanks. To whom should she go in her trouble? In one of Mary's little Sunday-school books she had read of answers to prayer; and from that, in her late trouble she had taken to reading her Bible.

"Come over and see our pail bee-hive."

This was the salutation that caused the family to look round suddenly one May morning; and as they did so, they saw friend M. at the open door, and John just behind him, with a smile on his face almost as broad as the one we saw on his face when he had climbed down out of the tree with that swarm of bees. John's father rose in a sort of listless, absent way, but Mary and her mother got their things with a cheerful willingness that showed that they expected to see something pleasant at least, and all followed John, who could hardly restrain his impatience as they crossed the road over to

their neighbor's a little beyond. Under the broad spreading limbs of a large apple-tree was a rustic seat where John's father and mother sat down. At a little distance two stout stakes had been driven, so that their tops were about two feet above the ground. On the top of each was a common wooden pail, laid on its side in a hollow cut in the top of the stake. To keep it in place securely, a piece of hoop-iron was nailed to each side of the stake, so as to pass over the pail. To keep the pail from any possibility of getting loose after it was crowded into the hoop attached to the stake, a couple of tinned tacks were pushed into the wood, back of the hoop. The hollows in the tops of the stakes were so made that the bottom of the pail stood exactly perpendicular.

One of the pails had an entrance made through the bottom of it, like the pail hive we saw put inside of the barrel. The other permitted the bees to pass out just under the glass circle that closed the hive like the one we saw down by the fence, and oh! but how the bees were working on the apple-bloom, and carrying in loads of honey and pollen!



MR. MERRYBANKS' PAIL BEE-HIVE APIARY.

"Why, Mr. M.," said John's mother, "there are more bees going out and in from these pail hives than from your large chaff hives; why is this? Can it be they are stronger in this small compass?"

"They are not as strong, ma'am; but, you see, their hive is in a circular form, and fewer bees are needed to keep up the required temperature to keep the brood from chilling, and the hives are really tighter, so far as cracks and crevices are concerned, this time of the year, than even the chaff hives."

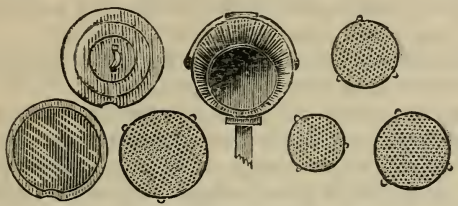
Just here John's father roused up a little and interposed, "Why, neighbor M., if the bees should all die, as mine have done, the pails would be just as good as ever, with this kind," pointing to the one where the bees came out of the mouth of the pail; "and if combs were melted up, one would have nothing left on his hands but those hoops with the rings on them, and the pail-covers, which certainly can't cost very much."

"The hoops to hold the combs can be made for about 3 cents each; and as only five are needed for a hive, the whole cost, including the cloth-lined glass, will not exceed 25 cents, and such a hive is all we shall ever need to raise queens and bees for the market."

"Mr. M., Mr. M.," said John, as he shook him by the arm, "just show them how easy it is to open the hives."

"All right," said our friend, and he sat down in front of one of the hives, on a low seat made on purpose, and after blowing a very small puff of smoke into the entrance, he drew out the cover, then twisted or rolled the glass a little, to sever all wax fastenings, and then gently drew it out and laid it down. You will observe, that the minute this door was drawn back the least bit it was perfectly loose, because of the flare of the pail. The first comb presented a view of many cells filled with various-colored pollen, and new honey. You will observe from the cut, that friend M. has dispensed with

the arms to the frames, and uses, in their stead, three wire rings, soldered to the metal hoops which hold the combs.



THE PAIL BEE-HIVE, WITH THE COMBS REMOVED.

These rings are placed at such distances on the hoops that the two lower ones support the weight of the honey, while the upper one guards the top of the comb from striking the pail and mashing the bees, and the three rings at the same time prevent any comb from being pressed so close to the one back of it as to injure the bees. Friend M. took hold of these rings, turned the combs slightly, and it lifted out without even the slightest jar. The comb was hung by one of the rings on a bent nail placed in the stake, and the whole five were quickly taken out in the same manner. After they had been examined, and the queen duly admired, as she kept on with her work of swinging around in circles, the whole were replaced, and the door was gently pushed into its place so as to push any bees clustered on the inside of the pail before it.

"You see," said Mr. M., "I have no mat, enameled sheet, burlap, or any thing of the kind to fuss with, before putting the cover of the hive on, and yet not a bee is killed, for I can see plainly through the glass what it is doing, as I crowd it back into place."

"But," said John's mother, "will not the rain beat in around the edges of the cover, or, in other words, will this pail hive do to stand outdoors like this, even in the summer time?"

"Why, madam," said Mr. M., "if the rain should beat in, do you not see it would run right out again? See! the bottom of the hive slants outward, and, so far as I have noticed, no rain has ever gone beyond the outer tin cover."

Here John's father knocked the ashes out of his pipe and listlessly picked up the cover, exclaiming,—

"Why, this is nothing but a common tin pot-cover, painted green. Why do you use tin in place of wood?"

"Because it will neither warp, twist, nor shrink; and, on account of its perfectly round shape, will always close the mouth of the pail against the weather and inquisitive robber-bees who might be prying around the cloth-lined edges of the glass circle."

"Mother! mother!" and John shook his mother's arm to attract her attention, "don't you believe Mr. M. has promised to make me one to put right through my window upstairs, where that glass is broken out, so I can look at the bees all the time while they are at work! It is to be just like the one he made for Mr. Root, that he has got in his greenhouse. But, won't it be fun?"

Well, I declare, my friends, I shall not be able to get to the point in the story in this chapter where friend M. gave us his ideas about feeding; and I hope, in the next chapter, to be able to tell you how God answered John's mother's prayers.

CHAPTER XIX.

HE THAT OVERCOMETH AND KEEPETH MY WORKS UNTO THE END, TO HIM WILL I GIVE POWER OVER THE NATIONS.—REV. 2:26.

OF course, there was no peace for anybody until John's pail bee-hive was properly fixed in the window upstairs, near the bed where he slept. As the lights in the window were rather small, it was thought best to remove the lower sash entirely, substituting a sash of John's own construction, covered with thin boards, through which a hole was cut, to let the pail go in about half way. The bottom of the pail projected outward, and in this was the entrance. As John was supposed to be joint inventor in the pail hive, Mr. Merrybanks gave him a good strong working colony; and as they were started just during locust-bloom, they very soon had their five combs pretty nearly filled. Pretty soon "pollen-laden bees" began to come round on the side of the comb next the glass, and the children thought there never was any thing, in the way of pets, so handsome. Every bee that came in with a nice load of bright yellow or orange-colored pollen, would shake himself, and wiggle in such a way that Mary and Freddie would have it he was doing it for pure joy, just the way John jumped up and down when he made the barrel hive roll off the table. After they got through the wiggling, and had sobered down a little, they would thrust their little legs, with the "loaves" on them, into a cell, and kick them off very much in the way the baby sometimes kicks off his shoes and stockings, and then off they went for another load. After Mr. Bee had gone, the children could plainly see the two little loaves lying in the cell where he had left them, until some other bee would poke his head in and stay for some time, deeply intent

on some important operation, as they thought, by the way in which the only visible tip of his body wiggled, and after he came out the pollen loaves were nicely patted down and made smooth. Mr. Merrybanks told them that the bee patted and smoothed it down by rubbing his head against it: or, at least, he had read so in the *British Bee-Journal*. Mr. M. often quotes that journal, you know.

Well, John was so taken up with his bee-hive that he hardly slept or ate; and although it was the last thing he looked at at night before he went to bed, it was the first thing he hastened to when he opened his eyes in the morning. To tell the truth, his mother, on going into his room one night, after he had long been asleep, found he had moved his bed up near the window, and was sleeping with a smile on his face, close up by that simple little pane of glass. The bees had just been building some new white comb, to fill a vacant place left accidentally; and as they did the greater part of the comb-building in the night, John had folded his pillows so as to raise his head close up to them. There they were, scampering about, and, as it seemed, fairly trembling in their eagerness as the snowy-white combs grew into those wondrous forms. In the stillness of the night, interrupted only by the breathing of her boy, she thought she heard a faint clicking noise, like the tramp, in miniature, of a thousand horsemen. She turned her ear nearer the bees; it was indeed their busy work, and the sound of their tiny mandibles against the glass; for they were fastening bits of comb to it, in many places, as they wished to have their habitation substantial and secure. How innocent and pure her boy looked as he lay there, unconscious that any one was near, sleeping as only those can sleep who are tired out with honest, healthful labor! She reflected how faithful and industrious he had been of late. So absorbed was he with his bees, he had hardly had time to think of going off with any of the wicked boys as he had a few months

previous been somewhat inclined to do. What had made such a difference in her family? She almost started, as it flashed upon her mind that there before her she saw the answer to her prayer of but a few weeks ago. Down she fell on her knees, at the thought, and silently thanked, again and again, that Savior who had been an ever-present help in trouble. Then, as she remembered her husband who was still out of work, she prayed for him, too. It was Saturday night; but as she at length lay down to rest it was with a greater feeling of nearness to God than she had ever known before, and with a happy trustful restful feeling that seemed to her almost too much happiness for one who had, almost all her life before this, known so much trial and trouble.

The next thing she remembered was hearing John's voice, calling, "O mother! father! come quick! the queen is laying right next to the glass. Come quick, or she may go round the other side again!" and off he scampered up stairs. At first, the feeling was somewhat of vexation at being awakened at such an early hour on Sunday morning; but as she thought of the events of the evening before, and reflected further that the sun was already up and shining, she hastened to get up, as did her husband also, after he rubbed his eyes until he was quite awake. Mary was on hand too; and although all the family looked a little as if they had been scared out by an alarm of fire, they soon began to share John's enthusiasm, at least to some extent. There the queen was with her long tapering body, busily engaged at her appointed task, as unconcerned as if she were not the center of an admiring audience. Her mock gravity as she settled herself in a cell, and remained the center of a caressing circle of bees, was such that John laughed until the tears stood in his eyes.

"O mother! mother! may I go over and ask Freddie Merrybanks to come over and see her too? Please, mother, it won't be wicked to come over just a minute. You know she

will get this side all filled to-day, and won't ever come out this way again. Please, mother, may I go?"

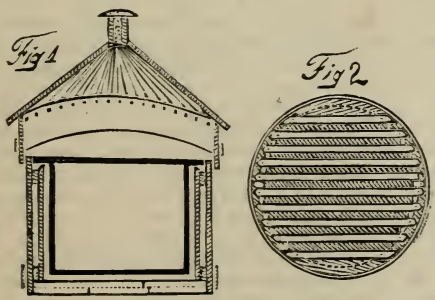
Silence gave consent, so John thought, and off he was like an arrow. Fearing his mother might repent, as it seemed, he jumped almost the whole way from the top of the stairs to the bottom, and was soon out of hearing, if not out of sight. In a very short time, not only Freddie was seen coming, but friend Merrybanks too. John's father was a little surprised at this, knowing his strict ideas in regard to the Sabbath; but after all had looked at the queen, and friend M. had given them a little talk in regard to the greatness and goodness of God in endowing these little creatures with such a wonderful instinct, Mary, apparently by accident, turned the whole state of affairs in the right direction after all, by coming up to her father, and saying, as she took his hand in both of hers,—

"Now, pa, we have all had such a real good time in looking at the queen, you will come with us to Sunday-school, won't you? You see if we do not have just as good a time there."

Friend M. joined in the request too; and, almost before he had time to consider, he gave a promise, and then reflected that he had no suitable clothes to go to such a place. In fact, he had not been inside of a meeting-house in so long a time, he hardly knew how folks did dress or act there. John's mother listened, while her heart almost stood still. Was the time of miracles still here? Was it really possible that God had heard that prayer of only last night? and was her husband really going with the rest to church or Sabbath-school? He was a man of his word, despite his other failings, and he did go to that very little church, the steeple of which you have so often noticed over among the trees. He did not seem to get interested in the sermon, and finally went to sleep, much to his wife's surprise and mortification. After service, during the few moments that intervened before the Sunday-school, the superintendent took him by the hand and spoke pleasantly to

him, though still not in such a way as to remind him that it was singular to see him there; and in the Bible-class, where he sat with his wife, there seemed such a pleasant and friendly feeling, he really, somewhat to his surprise, enjoyed it so that he was actually sorry when it was over. On the way home he asked so many questions of his wife in regard to the lesson and people present, that she forgot his sleeping during the morning, and was again inwardly thanking God for his great mercies. After supper he lighted his pipe, and, in spite of his wife's pleading, sauntered off up to the "Corners" as usual. Who shall fathom the mystery of the human heart?

Next evening friend Merrybanks came over, with a number of the *British Bee-Journal*. All hands gathered eagerly around while he spread it out upon the table. Mary, too, was interested, for that pail bee-hive seemed especially the property of the children since the stampede down by the hog-pen; and as friend M. announced that they had started a round cheap hive in England too, all were eager to see what it was like. We will just take a peep over their shoulders at the picture they saw on the broad clean pages of the journal.



THE CHEESE-BOX BEE-HIVE.

After all had taken a good look at the picture, Mr. M. read from the description as follows:—

CHEAP HIVE FOR AMATEURS.

I send you a sketch and description of a very cheap hive, which some of your readers, who make their own, may try their hands upon. It is made out of two and a half American cheese-boxes, which cost me fourpence each; one 15 inches in diameter serves for the inner skin, and one of 16 inches in diameter for the outer skin of the hive. (The usual depth of these boxes is from 9 to 10 inches.) The inner skin should be three-eighths of an inch higher than the outer to form the feather edge on which the frames are to rest. The two skins are kept apart by a double hoop ¾ of an inch wide, placed at the top and bottom. These may be made by cutting into halves the hoops of the box, and as they are usually ¼ of an inch thick, they will keep the two skins ½ of an inch apart, and thus form a sufficient air-space between them. As strong a hoop as can be got from the boxes and lids must be put round the hive, standing one inch above the outer skin, and another at five-eighths of an inch below the outer skin. Room will thus be given for the thickness of the frames and quilt above, and the floor-board will be overlapped below, and wet and rain excluded. The floor-board is made from the box-lid and bottom. These are usually in three pieces, and when nailed together should be crossed under side-pieces. Of these the middle one should project, to form the alighting-board, and the deficiency supplied from any piece of wood at hand. The floor-board will thus be double. The upper thickness is cut away, sloping upward to form a sunk entrance into the hive. The floor-board is represented in its place in Fig. 1, which represents a section from side to side with one of the middle frames in position. The hive has a cover made from half a box, five inches in height, and over this is a conical top made of paper-felt, painted, and fastened with thin copper wire to the wooden part; the flight-hole, porch, and slot for slides or doors, which are made of strong tin or zinc bent to shape. Fig. 2 shows the arrangement of the frames, ten in number. Half of them have distance-blocks toward the front, and half toward the back, both blocks being on the same side of each frame. In the center are 2 movable blocks attached to the side of hive by a thin but strong piece of string. When manipulating they are lifted out, and thus room is given to move all the frames. The whole cost of materials, including paint, panel-nails, screws (if any), and putty, is about 2*s*., and certainly does not exceed 2*s*. 6*d*.; but I must add, that there is a good deal of work in the hive, and it requires much nicety in fitting, though not more than most amateur carpenters are equal to.

The result is a round hive, which in shape corresponds with that of a cluster of bees, and I think is dryer than the square hives, in the corners of which moisture is apt to be condensed; and, secondly, is much more shapely and ornamental in a garden, and equally adapted for carrying supers of any kind desired.

"There," said Mr. M., "they have not got so near a sphere as we have, after all, and the hive is a deal more expensive every way. The combs would handle nicely after one is out; for by moving them toward the center, every one would be free, while, when in place and the loose block put in, all are tight and strong."

"But," said John, "they have eight frames, while we have in our hive but five, and such frames as those must be a great deal of trouble to make." You see, John was something of a genius, and knew the expense of whittling out things.

"Nevertheless," remarked Mr. M., "I am very glad to see this description, for it indicates a wish, on the part of the people, to make common implements and utensils serve a part in providing habitations and implements for the care and comfort of our queer little domestic friends. Many thanks to the editor of the *B. B. J.*" And he gathered up the journal, and put it in one of his many pockets, grabbed up Mary, and placing her on one of his broad shoulders, started out in the darkness of the night, amid her protests and the laughter of the whole family. Before he had gone many steps, however—come to think of it, I guess I will tell what an awful muss they got into by some more of that boy John's "everlasting carelessness," in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

"THEIR FEET WERE SWIFT TO DO EVIL."

BEFORE I tell you of the mishap of friend M. with Mary on his shoulder, I shall have to explain that John and the doctor's boy—didn't I tell you they had a doctor in Onionville? Well, they have one, and a very good doctor he is, too, only, like a great many other doctors, he thinks himself too wise, or something, to be seen in Sunday-school, and he also, it is said, takes medicine quite frequently out of a bottle, when he isn't sick at all. Well, John and the doctor's boy had made a bargain with a farmer a little out of town to hoe corn for him until they had paid for a hive of bees. Under the inspiration of the bee-fever they worked hard and patiently, and the farmer, who was a very good old man, gave them one of his best, heavy with honey and bees, as they usually are in the month of June. As soon as their task was completed, boy-like they must have their bees home at once; and although the farmer told them they were too tired to carry them that night, nothing would do but that they must be taken right along. With a little smoke they were all driven into the hive, and a sheet tied under the mouth, and the corners brought over the top and tied. Under the knots a stick was placed, and the boys started home with them full of enthusiasm. It was at the close of a warm day, and they were tired before they started, and it was nothing strange that their zeal considerably abated before they got to the village through which they had to pass.

"O John!" said the doctor's boy, "I am awful thirsty; let us stop at the grocery and get some beer."

John knew his mother would feel badly if she knew he had been drinking beer; but he knew, too, that Tom would jeer

at him if he said any thing about his mother; so he only made the objection that it cost money.

"But I'll stand treat, and so it won't cost you any thing;" and before John could offer a word more, the bees were hastily set down, and the beer was ordered. They had been enjoined, when starting out, not to set the hive flat down when they stopped to rest; but this they forgot all about, and down it went, the mouth in the soft dust of the road, closing every air-passage through the cloth, which was already densely covered with panting bees. It was nearly dark when they got home, and John, being, unlike the doctor's boy, not much used to even mild stimulants, had a headache that made him glad to set the bees down anywhere. Accordingly it was deposited on a corner of the doorstep. Just at this juncture some boys came along and called to them that they were going over to the doctor's to kill the toads that were eating up his bees. John objected, on the ground that their bees must be located and let out.

"Why, they can't fly any to-night," said one of the boys; "come on, and see us demolish the toads."

"We will have lots of fun with them," said another, and off they went, laughing and yelling as only a tribe of street-boys can do. Down went the hive again, and off John and Tom put after them, tired as they were. Again was John led away against his better judgment, because he had not the strength of mind to say *no* when invited. After they had tortured and murdered all the toads and frogs they could find, the boys ventured near the doctor's house, where he and a brother bee-keeper were discussing the cause of the losses last winter.

THE DOCTOR AND THE SHOEMAKER DISCUSSING THE BEE-DISEASE.

John got home quite late; and as his conscience troubled him in regard to the events of the last few hours, he slipped in quietly and kept pretty still, until he became interested in friend Merrybanks' reading. By this time he had forgotten all about the bee-hive, and never thought of it again until friend M. stumbled against it in the dark, as I began to tell you in the last chapter. At the scream and commotion, John's mother brought a light, and friend M. was just picking himself up out of the dust, after having stumbled over the hive. Mary was, of course, unhurt, for he took good care to hold her up safely; but, oh my! what a looking sight was that hive! The combs were nearly all melted and broken down in one dauby, sticky mass, and bees as black as ink were dragging their daubed and sticky bodies through the dust, in

hopeless misery. Friend M. looked just one second, and then gathered up the sheets, and stopped the poor innocents from getting out.

"Have you got a queenless hive, with plenty of empty combs?" asked he quickly of John's father.

"Yes, sir; two of 'em."

"Bring the light and guide me to them."

At this he lifted the sticky hive, and all went for the apiary.

"John, put an empty story on this hive."

John was ready enough now to obey orders. The hive was on, and the bees were then carefully poured on the tops of the frames and astonished bees below. All hands soon set to work so busily licking up the honey, that they forgot to sting; and after the crawling bees were down in the hive, the combs were lifted carefully, and set up against the sides in such a way that the bees could care for the unsealed brood, and the sealed could hatch out. In this way, the whole contents were disposed of. Of course, bees kept crawling up the sides of this second story, but John brushed them back, while his father held the light at a little distance. After the hive was pretty nearly empty, friend M. set it down, and asked for the other queenless colony. With a quick but quiet movement this colony, being in a Simplicity hive, was raised and set over the one containing the drowned bees, and not a bee was mashed, nor could one more crawl out in the dirt without coming through the clean, live bees in the lower story of this three-story triple colony.

"But won't they fight?" said John.

"No danger of fighting, with all this mass of honey to take care of," said Mr. M.; and he moved the whole back a little, so as to give a larger entrance. "The daubed bees will naturally crawl upward, and are sure to get licked off clean, no matter which way they go. The bees from above and below

will, unitedly, have every thing clean before morning, and the loose honey all put near the brood in the good combs."

The old sticky hive was then set over a colony with a good queen, and all went home. I do not know what the rest of them dreamed when they got to sleep; but poor, tired, sticky, guilty John dreamed he was a queen-bee pursued by a great monster of a toad with horrid eyes and a great club. This club was full of sharp spikes; and as he raised it over him, John distinctly recalled the look of the poor toads as they dealt them blow after blow, without mercy, just the evening before.

JOHN'S DREAM.

With a scream of terror John awoke to find it was only a terrible nightmare, and, what was more strange, it was his

mother's soothing voice that quieted his nerves and bid him tell her all about it. How came she there at such a time of night? She came to pray for her boy at his bedside, as she had so many times before, and God had answered her by so ordering it that she should be there at just the time, of all others, when John would be most likely to tell her of his first steps in sin. He told her all about the events of the evening, and promised her not only to never allow another drop of beer to pass his lips, but to carefully avoid the society of bad and wicked boys, even though he had to stay at home without company at all. Before going back, she opened her little Bible and read,—

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not," etc.

Friend M. came over in the morning, and John just laughed to see that all the bees were clean and comparatively bright. The hives were taken apart, and each restored as near as possible, to its original place. The brood from the box hive was nicely put into frames, and as half the hive belonged to Tom, the stock was fairly divided, giving Tom the queen, while John had a capped cell in his. Tom came after his colony in the afternoon, bringing a lot of boys with him. When some instruction was offered him in regard to moving them, he declined, saying he knew how to handle bees as well as anybody. He would not even accept the loan of a veil or smoker, saying his father never used any such things, and he knew how. I really can not spare the time to tell you how Tom prospered with his bees, but I will give you his picture as he appeared next day.

TOM, THE DOCTOR'S SON.

Good-by, kind friends, until next time.

CHAPTER XXI.

SOMETHING ABOUT HOW THEY ARE GOING TO FEED THEIR BEES IN ONIONVILLE THIS WINTER.

JOHN'S father had a little piece of land, which he cultivated after a fashion, when he had no other work on hand. He had this year got it planted to corn, and the corn was up so as to need cultivating. To do this, he must borrow a horse; but, strangely, this year everybody wanted to use their horses, or else they had not much sympathy for a man who seemed to take life so very easily, and so the corn was growing up to weeds. His wife gently remonstrated; but he replied that, as no horse was to be had, he did not see how the matter could well be helped, and so kept on smoking his pipe quite complacently. This was very trying to her, and even John urged that they should go at it and hoe the corn without cultivating it.

"Why not buy a horse, father?"

Sure enough; why not buy a horse, and be independent of these pesky neighbors, who never cared whether they accommodated a body or not? But where was the money? He sauntered off, and, before night, returned with the information that he had found a horse, and that the man would give him time on it, with one condition. The condition was, that their little home should be mortgaged as security. John's mother had been praying for their little family, oh how earnestly! but she could not see any answer to prayer in all this. Knowing her husband as she did, she had little hope that the money would ever be raised. Still, as John and his father both talked of how they could get lots of work to do, if they only had a horse, she finally consented. The horse was purchased, and the cultivator was started; but, somehow or other, before

the field was half gone over, even one way, the horse was turned out, and our friend sat in the yard smoking his pipe as in times past. It did not matter how busy the birds were, building their nests, nor how eager the bees were in gathering pollen from the early sweet corn that was already beginning to tassel, nor how busy the rest of the town were in their gardens, cornfields, and meadows, this man sat and smoked his pipe all the same. His poor wife was trying in vain to remember some passage in her little Bible that would give one comfort and cheer in a time like this. She remembered some passages in the Psalms that had always before seemed strange and unaccountable to her. Here was one of them :—

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble : incline thine ear unto me : in the day when I call, answer me speedily.—Ps. 102:1, 2.

Was it all this trouble that was beginning to show her how David felt when he said, "Hear my prayer," "hide not thy face," and, "incline thine ear"? Was it possible that God knew all this trouble would result in her own good, if she took it in a way that sent her to him as her only refuge in the time of trouble, with a faith that made her prayer importunity? If so, O Lord, thy will, not mine, be done. And then she read the following verses from the same Psalm :—

But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever ; and thy remembrance unto all generations. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

After this she felt that in some way deliverance was coming; so she went on with her work with a trust in that promise that he would "regard the prayer of the destitute." "I will do just the best I can, and be not troubled," she said to herself.

Just here the doctor drove up in his gig, and, meeting friend Merrybanks, who was going in the opposite direction, asked him how he should feed his bees after basswood had ceased. The doctor and the shoemaker, as well as John's father, had

all increased their bees in order to fill their empty hives, and save their combs from the moth. They had also secured some comb honey, but many of the colonies were weak in bees, and almost all of them needed stores. As the shoemaker did not live far off, he saw the three talking, and came to hear what it was all about; so friend M. had an opportunity of talking to them all together.

MR. MERRYBANKS TELLS HOW TO FEED BEES THE FIRST OF AUGUST, SO AS TO GET THEM IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WINTERING TRIM.

"My friends, we must take into consideration that, although we seldom have honey enough after this time for bees to build up to the best advantage, so as to be ready for winter, we usually have some honey; and we do not want our feeding to stand in the way of having the bees get all they can from natural sources. I once fed a weak nucleus about 40 lbs. of honey in the fall, to build them up into a strong colony, which I succeeded in doing, but they stuck to the feeder all day long, to the entire exclusion of going to the fields; and as the fall happened to be one when bees worked on the second crop of red clover, I had others that, during the same time, built up of themselves, and even gave us some honey in surplus-boxes. The feeding was not only an expensive operation, but it was really a damage to them, for it got them finally so they would not work at all, unless it was to bring in the little pollen they needed. If you want to make these colonies which are poor in bees and stores, winter, it will by no means answer to say we will let them take their chances. If the yield of honey stops for only two weeks, it will cause the queens to cease laying, to a great extent, and old queens will sometimes stop almost entirely. The yield of honey is most favorable for brood-rearing when it comes just fast enough to cause the bees to build a little snow-white comb along the tops of the frames. You all know what this is, when you see, by turning

the mat back, this thrifty white look on the combs, just over the center of the brood-nest."

Here friend M. gathered up his reins, and was about to go on; but they almost with one accord begged him to tell them *what* they should feed.

"You wish to use something that will be the safest and best for winter stores, and no mistake about it?"

"Yes, sir," said they almost all at once.

"Well, then, use granulated sugar, and nothing else," and he prepared to start again.

"But, hold on a minute," said John's father; "*how* shall we feed it?" You see, he always had an eye out for the labor to be performed, and wanted just the very easiest way.

"Oh, yes! and I had almost forgotten to say that I would feed only at evening, and just so much as they would take up at night, and no more. I never want to see bees hanging around feeders during the day time. Neither do I like to see feeders around in sight in the day time to entice robber-bees and flies to hang around them, attracted by the scent of the sugar they had contained the night before. I do not feel as much like advising candy as I did a few years ago, on several accounts. It is true, it is but little trouble; but if the bees take it as fast as they should, they have to be constantly bringing water from somewhere. Besides, it crumbles down, and grains of it get out around the alighting-board to attract flies and robber-bees as before. Worst of all, it is pretty hard to so manage it that, when it is all used up, the bees will not have a comb built in its place. Frames having a little piece of comb in them, to be bundled about in the apiary, are not what we want. The small supply that the bees need, to enable them to build up to the best advantage, must be given regularly; if you miss even one or two days, it will show a break in the amount of eggs laid. You also wish to keep so sharp an eye on the proceedings that, should natural stores

commence to come in at any time, sufficient for the purpose, you can stop right off short, for we do not wish to waste sugar, unless it is absolutely necessary. I think I would use a Simplicity feeder, and either place it on the outside of the division-board, or on the top of the frames, turning back the mat enough to let the bees to it. If handier, just fill the feeder with granulated sugar, and then pour on water from a coffee-pot whenever you wish to feed them. The amount of water poured on will determine the amount you wish to give them. When you wish to fix them for winter I would put a division-board in each side of the hive: this will leave room for six or seven brood-combs, and I would not attempt to winter a colony that would not cover pretty well at least six combs. Fix the combs as you wish them to remain over winter; see that the queen is laying; then cover them with a mat, having a two-inch hole cut through it right over where the center of the brood-nest comes. This hole can be quickly cut with a two-inch punch, such as tinners use. In fact, you can cut quite a number at once. Put on the mat, and set your Simplicity feeder right beside this hole. This should be arranged about the middle of September. Now feed them until they get every thing waxed up solid. Feed them so that the swarm can not possibly get over to any side of the hive where there are no sealed stores, for the brood-nest is in the center, and sealed stores are all around them a solid wall of food, and pure, wholesome food too. If you leave the hole in them at open all winter, you will have about the same conditions as those who leave sections on all winter. If you think there should be something in the upper story to keep them warmer, fill it with forest-leaves. If you don't like that way, put in your usual chaff cushions. If you have bees in plenty, so as to crowd out of the hive, unless it is pretty cool, and they have an abundance of pure sugar stores, they will probably winter

well almost anywhere. Git up, Dobbin! I have stayed too long already."

"Just a minute more," said John's father. "About how much sugar will it take to fill them all up in this way?"

"If they have no stores to speak of August 1st, but good combs, it will take from 20 to 25 lbs. perhaps. Git up!"

"Please, just one thing more: Can't we get along without buying feeders?"

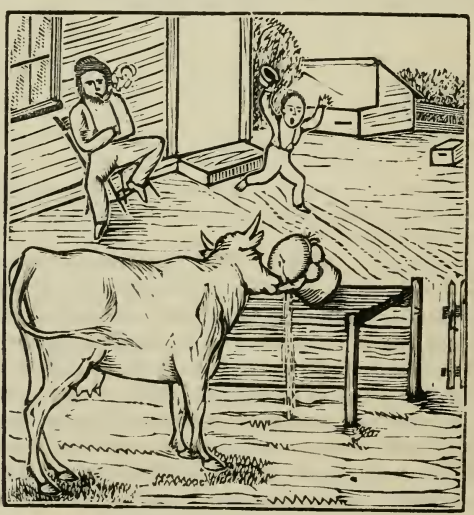
"Why, come to think of it, I do not know but that you can. Just spread the sugar all around the auger-hole, and then drop on slowly as much water as you can without having it run down into the hive too much. When the bees have licked it dry, wet it again. I once fed a colony thus for winter, and they came through nicely. *Git up, Dobbin!*"

CHAPTER XXII.

Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard.—DAN. 10:12.

IT was Saturday. John's father sat out in front of the house, smoking as usual. I have mentioned that they had secured a small amount of honey from their bees, besides increasing to get bees to cover the empty combs. Well, John's mother had, by the use of an extractor, also secured a stone crock full of most beautiful, thick, crystal, basswood honey, which she had purposed saving for family use. However, as her husband was out of work, or at least thought he was, there was very great need of a little cash to supply the needs of the table, and even to get clothing to make the children look decent, when they went to Sunday-school. As a last

resort, she had decided to sell this crock of nice honey, and so John had been up to the grocery with a small sample of it. The grocer offered 16 cents per lb.. in consideration of its being extra nice, and because the dry weather had made not only honey. but fruit and all kinds of sauce, very scarce. As the crock was quite heavy, friend Merrybanks had volunteered to take it up town, if John would set it out by the gate, where it would be handy to set into the buggy as he came along. A white clean cloth had been tied over the top to keep out dust; and, as John's father sat in sight, nobody thought but that it was safe enough. It was not many minutes, however, before a sleek-looking cow of inquiring disposition came along. She looked this way and that. as she came



THE COW AND THE CROCK OF HONEY.

along the road, and finally ventured cautiously to walk slowly up and smell of the crock and its contents. She seemed satisfied, apparently, with her investigations, for, after one or two sniffs, she wound her tongue around a loose corner of the cloth, much as she would a nice tuft of grass, and, giving it a dextrous pull, tipped crock and contents down on to the round hard stones below.

John's father saw her from the first; but his tobacco had so stupefied his senses (driving away "dull care") I suppose, that it didn't occur to him she might do any harm, until the crock was down and broken.

"Whay! go 'long there, you old brute!"

His cries brought John and his mother, and she, with tears in her eyes, that she could not keep back, made an effort to save some of the honey with the dirt, by scraping it into a piece of the broken crock. Just at this crisis friend M. and his wife came up in the buggy, and, while John's father still stood by smoking his pipe, friend M. was out in an instant; and, not until every particle of earth or stones containing a drop of honey was scooped up, did he even stop to talk about it. A good swarm of bees was raised up, and an empty Simplicity hive placed under them. Then a second Simplicity hive was placed over the colony, and the pans containing the dirt and honey were placed in this upper story. All of the stones and lumps of earth that could be handled were placed on the frames. As the bees licked off the honey, the dirt crumbled and fell through to the bottom of the hive; and finally, the whole contents of the pans were turned over on the frames also, fresh combs being given the bees as fast as they needed more room. The honey was eventually saved, but it took several days to get it done, and its flavor was spoiled for anything but bee-food. Had it been sold at the grocery, each pound of honey would have bought granulated sugar enough for two pounds of better and more wholesome food for the

bees. After the honey was disposed of, friend M. gave them a good-natured lecture on carelessness. His wife ventured to suggest that accidents would sometimes happen, any way.

"But, my friends, accidents, the greater part of them, need *not* happen."

"Yes," chimed in John's father. "If Uncle Billy, the rich old curmudgeon, would keep his cows shut up, instead of roaming the streets, preying on the property of poor, hard-working men like myself, there would not be such accidents."

Uncle Billy was the rich man of the neighborhood, and it was talked about that he let his cattle run in the streets when the grass got high, presuming that no one would interfere, just because he was rich. Mr. M. therefore began as follows:

"Look here, neighbor; it is quite likely that Uncle Billy has his faults, like all the rest of us; but it is a very bad way to get into, of complaining of our neighbors when any thing goes wrong. It is a great deal better to form a habit of *shouldering* what seems to us to be a little more than our share of every such transaction. Talking about neighbors' faults seldom makes them any better; but talking about our own sins and shortcomings, in the proper spirit, almost always brings about more or less of reform."

"But, neighbor M., you don't pretend to say that we were in any way at fault for the cow being in the street and pulling the crock of honey over?"

"I do mean you were considerably at fault in setting any thing so valuable and fragile in any such exposed public place. It is true, I should never have thought of a cow being in the street, nor of her taking any such mischievous notion into her head; but I should have had a sort of instinctive dread of leaving that crock standing in that way, outside the fence, and this same feeling would have prompted me to put it in a place of safety, or ask somebody to watch it."

"Father sat right in plain sight of it, smoking his pipe,

when I put it there," suggested John, who, human like, had a sort of fancy for shoving the blame off on somebody else, even though that somebody else was his own father.

Friend M. looked at the pipe, and then at his wife, in an undecided way, as if he were questioning within himself whether it would be well, or do any good, to again attack that old subject of tobacco, but evidently concluded to risk it, and proceeded.—

"Neighbor, will you pardon the liberty, if I say a word more about that pipe of yours?"

John's father good-naturedly removed the pipe from his mouth, and, holding it off a little, while he contemplated it with a smile and a sort of twinkle in his eye, said,—

"By all means, friend M.; say any thing about the *pipe* you choose," seeming to intimate that, so long as he blamed the pipe, and not himself, it would be all right. His friend, however, seemed to have no purpose of letting him off in that way, for he went on.—

"Well, what I wished to say was this: That, had your senses not been dulled by the fumes of that pipe, you would have seen that cow in time to have frightened her away, and thus saved all this honey your wife has thought so much of."

Friend M. here stopped abruptly, and began feeling in his pockets, first one and then the other. Finally he stood up and began fumbling in his coat-tail pockets. At this crisis of the proceeding, old Dobbin evidently thought they had talked long enough, at least on one subject; and, deciding that further forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, with sudden vehemence made a vigorous push to go on. The effect was, in spite of Mrs. M.'s efforts to the contrary, to throw our rotund friend violently backward. In his efforts to save himself he stuck out his feet, but, alas! they did not quite reach the dash-board, and by the time he was fairly on his back on the seat, his feet stuck straight up in the air. His feet and ankles, although

without question highly useful to himself at least, were so far from being ornamental, that, in spite of the evident danger, the children burst out laughing; and as his good wife, while she held old Dobbin with one hand, took the other and pushed the aforesaid feet and ankles down into their proper position (thus bringing him straight up on the seat), the rest joined heartily in the laugh also. Even John's mother laughed through her tears at his queer, surprised look, until she almost cried again; and then, when friend M. joined in, the rest took another start, until old Dobbin looked around to see if it were really true that everybody had gone crazy, when there was *certainly* nothing to laugh at, at all. Honest old Dobbin had his views of the fitness of things as well as other people; and the oats at home, that he would have had long before this, were to him more sensible and substantial than any thing that all this talk amounted to. If the truth were told, he had played a more important part in the morning's proceedings than any one there was perhaps aware of, except John's father; for at the disputation about this tobacco, he had begun to be violently angry. After the laugh, however, he so far forgot it that he was the first one to ask for that wonderful something that was to come out of the coat-tail pocket.

"Why," said friend M., "here it is. It is a little pamphlet, sold for 3 cts., by Health Reformer, Battle Creek, Mich., that I wish to read from." Bidding Dobbin be quiet, he adjusted his specs and read as follows:—

TOBACCO-USING PROMOTES CHEERFULNESS.

Tobacco stupefies, intoxicates, narcotizes; if this is cheerfulness, then we may indorse the lines of the poetic lover of the article, who sang:

Sublime tobacco, which from East to West,
Cheers the tar's labor and the Turkman's rest.

Deprive the tobacco-chewer of his quid, or the smoker of his idolized pipe, and mark how suddenly his cheerfulness disappears. How suddenly he awakes to all the perplexities and irritations of life, like a person awakening from sleep.

The drunkard feels happy while sipping his bowl of steaming sling; but how does he feel next morning after a "spree"? A more wretched creature is scarcely imaginable. The tobacco-user does not find his real status so often, because he is *drunk all the time*, and thus mistakes his comfortable feeling for cheerfulness—a very low grade of enjoyment.

IT IS THE POOR MAN'S ONLY LUXURY.

Would-be philanthropists put in the plea for tobacco that it is the only luxury which poverty allows the poor laborer who toils for a daily pittance. With tobacco he feels contented with his lot. To him it is food, raiment, riches, and contentment, for it renders him oblivious to the lack of any and all of them. How cruel, then, to take from him such a boon!

Suppose all men were rendered thus stupid and insensible, incapable of aspiring to any condition higher, nobler, or better than that in which circumstances placed them. How soon would complete stagnation ensue! How soon would all progress cease! and how quickly would the world relapse into the barbarism of the Middle Ages!

As he got to the end, Dobbin shook his head and made such a vigorous effort to go on, that it was hard to keep him still; but Mrs. M., to everybody's surprise, declared that *she* had a word to say.

"By all means, let us hear it," said they all.

"It is just this. I fear my husband has given you the impression that we never have any accidents in our home, and that all he does is always all right, and that he never does any careless or thoughtless things. Husband, will you please tell them about that nice case of sections you had picked out with so much pains, to take to the fair?"

"There were 48 sections, and they weighed 38 lbs.;" and he stopped there, with a sort of sly twinkle in his eye.

"But you want to be honest, now, and go on and tell the rest."

"Well, they were very nice and straight and true and white and perfect."

"Yes, but go on and tell it all."

"I didn't get the first premium."

"Now, that isn't frank and honest. Tell them *why* you did not take the premium."

"I concluded not to take them to the fair."

"Now, look here; if you do not tell it straight, I will."

"Well, the cover got left off, and the bees got in."

"You mean, that you left the cover off yourself, and—"

"Well, haven't we got all the honey in the hives?"

Dobbin here concluded the rest might do as they chose, but that *he* was going home; and off he went, and nobody stopped him this time.

John's mother felt sad during the day; but under it all seemed to be a bright something—something like a promise that made her light at times, in spite of herself. Toward night, a neighbor brought her a new bright half-dollar for some washing she had done; and as she had been wondering how they should get the means to purchase some butter needed during the Sabbath, she gave her husband the plate, and asked him to get it for her at the grocery. A crowd was lounging about as usual Saturday night, and he, instead of doing his errand and passing on, stopped to hear what they were saying. The talk seemed to be on the amount of beer a man might drink at one time. The keeper of the grocery-store was evidently quite an interested listener, for the subject seemed to promise to him the sale of quite a lot of beer. The doctor said he could drink three glasses without trouble. The shoemaker said he would drink four if any one would pay for it.

"Suppose you fail," said one."

"Then I will pay for it myself."

"And drinks for the crowd?" said another.

The talk then went on, and banter after banter followed until the doctor said he would drink eight glasses if any one would pay for it, and drinks for the crowd. As is usual, no one of those present had any money; but one of them, notic-

ing the half-dollar our friend had in his fingers, whispered, "Take him up! he knows he can't do it. Why, it is an utter impossibility. He won't hurt himself; let's see the fun."

Poor, weak man! Thinking, of course, there was no chance of losing his poor wife's hard earnings, he was coaxed into it, as many another weak man has been. I presume he had forgotten the little text his children had been repeating about being coaxed by sinners.

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.—PROV. 1:10.

The doctor, with a self-complacent smile, stepped up and said,—

"Gentlemen, here is to your health. That is one glass. And that is another," and so on with the whole eight. The grocer was careful to set out only what beer the half-dollar would pay for. I am glad to say, to the credit of John's father, that he did not drink any. What should he do? How could he ever take that empty plate, and go home facing that mild, patient, blue-eyed wife of his, and tell her he had fooled the money away she had worked so hard and wearily for, just to see one man make a brute of himself?

He wisely concluded to go home and tell his wife the whole truth, and ask her to have faith in his resolution to keep entirely away from the whole lot of such companions in the future. Although there was a tear in her eye, she told him to let it go and never mind; that if it resulted in his holding aloof from that class of men, it was probably a half-dollar well spent. Her kindness was the severest blow of all. He could have borne scolding and fault-finding far better than this treatment. To use one of his own expressions, it cut him up terribly. He thought of new resolutions, and what his friend had said about tobacco. He thought how self-denying his wife was, and, for that matter his whole family, and of how much comfort his tobacco-money would procure for them all. "Oh if I could only break off!" he thought. He had

tried before. In fact, he had made many resolutions, but none had ever been kept very long. In his inmost soul he felt that it would be folly to promise any more. He knew it was actions that were needed, not words. Where did his wife get her new-found strength? Had that Bible he had so often seen her reading, of late, any thing to do with it? He knew its teachings were right, and what he needed; but he had little faith that he could live up to any of them. Could God have any patience or care for one so weakly wicked as himself? He went and sat out by the door. For once in the world, the thought of his pipe was distasteful. In fact, it galled him to think of it. Before bedtime, John came up to his mother's side, as was his custom; and as he remembered the events of the day, he said,—

"Don't feel bad about the honey, mother; I will try awful hard to get some work, and I will work so hard they will all want me; and you see if I don't pay it all back to you."

The innocent, childish remark cut him to the quick again. It seemed to occur to him all at once, that God had put into the mouth of his little boy the very words he wanted spoken to him. He moved out among the bee-hives, and sat down there. Even the hum of the insects toiling inside their hives seemed a reproof to him. It seemed plain to him now why he had not been sought after when hands were wanted. He was not a profitable hand. His whole end and purpose had not been to serve his employer and get the work along, but rather to have the hours pass until quitting time. His own work, even, was neglected and undone. Something seemed to say to him that people could hardly expect him to work faithfully for them when he was too lazy to do his own work. His whole life seemed stretching out before him. The thought of it and the sight of it galled him until he could bear it no longer. Down on his knees he knelt alone in the night. It was not much of a prayer; but the words, "God have mercy on me a sinner,

and help me to be a better man," were carried above, and recorded in the Book of Life.

The minute he rose to his feet, a fear seized him that this would pass away, like other resolutions, and this caused a desire to spring up that he might have something given him to do, at once, right there in the night. God heard the thought,* and as quick as a flash his scanty woodpile rose up before him. Straight to it he went at once, and before 10 o'clock that Saturday night every stick was cut up into nice stove-lengths, even including the hard sticks that John had chopped at in vain, and tried to split for a year back. After that the yard was raked clean and smooth, a great portion of the wood carried in, and the rest piled up nicely for the Sabbath. His wife supposed it was done because he felt so much ashamed at the loss of the half-dollar, and of course she felt happy to see him show his penitence in such a practical way. I need hardly tell you he was happy, as well as tired; but he said very little, for the new guiding spirit seemed to say, "Let *actions* speak, rather than words."

Sunday morning he was up before sunrise, and, instead of the morning pipe, he proceeded at once to make himself as clean as possible. As he did not forget to include his tobacco-stained mouth in the general scrubbing, it took the best part of an hour. Such clothes as he had were scrupulously clean; and after he had them on, ready for church, he really looked fit to be kissed, not only by little Mary, but by his wife, too, even though the recollection of yesterday was still fresh in the minds of both. I tell you, a nice clean papa, clean in body, soul, mind, and spirit, is seldom unappreciated by any child. Well, our friend, while resolving that the Sabbath was to be a day of rest from the labors of the week, felt that God did not intend that it should be a day of idleness

*And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.—ISA. 65:24.

for him, at any rate. He began looking about the house for some lesson-helps for the coming Sabbath-school; but as all they had in the house were for juveniles, his wife suggested that he might go over to friend Merrybanks' for something that would prepare him better for the Bible-class. She seemed instinctively to feel that his present longing for something to do was the promptings of the voice of God. As he made known his request with a happy, good-natured smile on his face, friend M. could not help thinking, "Except ye become as little children, ye can not enter the kingdom of heaven." With his wife's little Bible, and the paper that had been loaned him, he was so busily engaged he hardly thought of breakfast at all until summoned by a hand laid lovingly on his head. Fresh eggs, with mealy potatoes, soft light bread, and, as sure as you live, a plate of nice yellow butter. Did God send that too? Across the table, up on the mantel, in plain sight, lay that old pipe.

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.—GENESIS 2:7.

Truly was he made of "the dust of the ground;" but since the moment he had knelt out in the darkness the night before, God had been breathing into his soul "the breath of life."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.—ROM. 12:11.

JOHN'S father thought he had never before in his life tasted any butter like that he found on the table that Sunday morning. It was because God sent it, and the things that God sends are not to be compared with the things in this world. Perhaps some of my readers may prefer to have me

state it in a different way. Well, one reason why he thought the butter was so very nice, was that he had been doing his duty, not only in using the Sabbath morning in a way he knew to be right, but that, when he sat down to the table, instead of pitching in and helping himself to the best of every thing, he waited on each of the children, and even passed to his wife the things she could not reach readily. When he saw that they were all lacking nothing, he helped himself. Also, the plate of butter was brought over by Freddie Merrybanks the evening before, saying his mother wished them to try a sample of the butter made from the fine Jersey cow that they had just purchased. Simple enough, was it not? Well, John's father thought God sent it, and I entirely agree with him; but you, my friend, may think otherwise if you wish, and we will not feel hard toward you, either. If you wish to have the butter good, try passing it to everybody else before you take any, and I assure you it will improve it amazingly, even if it be not made from a Jersey cow. John's father had just decided to follow Jesus, and so he "pleased not himself;" but I do not believe he knew where in the Bible it read so. Do you?

The whole family went to church, and as it was but a little way they went easily on foot. Our friend was a good deal interested in the sermon, but as there was not very much in it that applied directly to those just taking a start in the new way, he did not enjoy it as much as he did the Bible-class, where he could ask questions. His questions were of such a strange, out-of-the way kind, that he not only puzzled the teacher, who was the pastor of the church, but called the attention of many curious eyes toward him. I will give just one for a sample.

"Can a man be a Christian, who does not pay his debts?"

It may be that it was the money he owed for that horse that lay heavily on his conscience; but be that as it may, it

convinced the good pastor that his pupil was really in earnest, and it stirred him to unusual life and zeal, not only in the answer to that question, but through the whole lesson. With an inward prayer to God, that at least one seemed to be inquiring the way, he raised his spectacles, and, with a kindly smile beaming on his face, he replied to his questioner,—

"Really, friend Jones, I am not sure that questions of this kind admit of being answered by a simple yes or no. Had you asked if a man could be a Christian, who did not mean or propose to pay his debts, it would have been somewhat different, for all mankind would then answer alike, skeptics as well as Christians. Now, on the other hand, you know there are those who, in spite of all they can do, can not meet their just obligations; one on a bed of sickness, for instance. In that case, would it be right to say he could not be a Christian?"

"Well, how hard ought one to try who is not sick?"

"Why, my friend, I hardly feel competent to say; but I am pretty sure the harder he tries, the better Christian he will be—the more will he feel God's approval. You know the Bible says,—

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.—LUKE 10:27.

"That last clause seems to indicate that we ought to try pretty hard before deciding we can not give our neighbor that which is justly his own, should we not?"

"Will you please tell me where that text is?"

The teacher smiled at his almost boyish eagerness, and said,—

"Here; hand me your Bible, and I will mark it with my pencil."

"It was his wife's little Bible that he handed out, and as he did so he naturally glanced at her. There was a tear glistening in her eye, but with it was a look that told to him what others

could not see. When they were first married, she had an eager longing to have him stand well with the best people, and a true wifely pride in thinking he was a man among men. This hope, as it were, had almost died out through the idle and shiftless life he had passed; but now the hope had sprung up afresh; and through the thanksgiving to God for this change that seemed coming, there was, in that look, as she saw how pleased and animated the minister had seemed in this little talk, more than words could tell to her husband. He saw his wife's hands, worn with toil, and glanced across the little church to where John and Mary were. He took in at a glance the way in which their poor clothing contrasted with the comfortable though plain apparel of the rest of the congregation, and it seemed to him that, if God would only grant the same health he had enjoyed during those wasted years, he would ask no greater blessing. What a dear good kind man was their pastor! Why, it would be almost heaven upon earth to be permitted to live near such a man, and to help him, even only the little that *he* might do, in his God-appointed work of saving souls.

On the way home, the text—*his* text, was running constantly through his mind. As they sat down to dinner, without thinking he read it again from the little Bible, and, as a short silence ensued, it seemed to occur to all that this was their first asking of God's blessing, before partaking of their food. It seemed just then to the father that it would be a pleasant, happy thing to repeat this text, or something like it, as they gathered around the table before every meal.

If I am correct, during their talks and plans for their future during that Sabbath afternoon, there mingled in some plans and suggestions for business. The horse was talked about, and, I believe, nicely brushed up, and fed. I do not know but that the father, as well as John, was a little impatient to commence work. In the evening they all attended a temper-

ance meeting at their little church. *Their* little church. The thought came up to the father, that, so far in his life, he had not given one solitary copper to the support of it. The children had taken some pennies to the Sabbath-school, but no one in the world had ever seen him take a coin out of his pocket for the support of a church or minister. Just now he had not one copper in his pocket; but before another Sunday came, something seemed to promise there would be some. Several of their own people spoke at the temperance meeting; but our friend had a sort of feeling that he would prefer to try at least one week before saying any thing in public about what he was *going* to do. The old pipe lay on the mantel-piece still, and it had not been touched for *one whole day.*

"John, who can get up first in the morning—you or I?"

"Why, father, what are we going to do?"

"We are going to put our cornfield in the nicest trim of any one's in the neighborhood, and then we are going to do something to pay for old Jack, and get the mortgage from off our little home."

"Shall I call you as soon I am up?" said John, with a slight twinkle in his eye.

John was up by sunrise, or a little before, but he did not call his father. The horse was up and hitched to the cultivator, and John came just in the nick of time to go on with the work. Before night the field was cultivated twice in a row both ways, and hoed so nicely that scarcely a weed could be found. To be sure no weeds in between the stalks were skipped, the old dry hard earth was pulled away, and fresh mellow soil put around in its place. More than one of the neighbors stopped and looked at the field, remarking, "Well, Mr. Jones has done a nice job on that corn-field, after all." Several times during the day there were opportunities to stop and talk, but he resisted the temptation, and, while he was courteous, gave them to understand he was busy.

At one side of his lot, near the house, was a wet, swampy place. As it was too miry to be of any use, it had become a sort of "catch-all" place for old rubbish. Old boots and shoes; rusty, worn-out tea-kettles, oyster-cans, feathers, broken crockery, empty boxes, etc., had been thrown promiscuously into this place, and, as it was a handy place, slops and soapsuds had also been thrown there. The ducks and chickens, finding the rank foul weeds a sort of shady place, had also passed a great deal of their time there, until the stench of the place had somehow led everybody to avoid it. As it was next to the street, it added very much to the untidiness and uninviting appearance of the place. John's mother had often asked if a ditch could not be so dug as to let off the wetness, but it had never been done. Right near the spot was a low place in the road, and a small bridge had been built over it to take the water, that seemed, winter and summer, to be oozing out of this miry place. It was the middle of the afternoon when the corn was finished, and he felt a terrible longing to sit down with his pipe; but with a prayer to God for help, he told John, after he had rested awhile, he might help him down by the bridge.

"Why, father, what are you going to do down by the bridge?"

"When you come down, I will tell you."

"Why, I'm not much tired: I guess I will go now."

A small pool of water lay under the bridge, but Mr. Jones found it was mostly owing to a great growth of peppermint, just below, on which the bees were just then busily at work. With hoe and shovel and spade he soon let this water off without interfering with much of the peppermint either. Then he went above the bridge and cleaned out the channel clear up to his own fence. After getting out the gravel and mud, he found a soft rock that he could cut pretty easily with his pick and spade. John brought his kite-string, and it was

stretched from the fence, right up through the wettest part of that unsightly slop-hole. After the rock was laid bare, a channel the width of the spade was cut into it, deep enough to take all the water, and over this were placed short pine boards, made by cutting up old dry-goods boxes found about the premises. The boards were laid crosswise on the rock, so as to support the dirt more effectually. Mary and Freddie were there by the time the work was well started, and Freddie suggested they should hunt flat stones, so as to make the covering as durable as the sides.

"Yes," said John, "and we can take that tinware and pound it down flat and use that."

"Why," said Freddie, "my pa has a pair of shears to cut tin, and I know he will let us have them so we can cut the tin up and make it go a great deal further."

Mary here chimed in, "And I can hunt up all the old tin pails and basins and wash-boilers, and get them out of sight and make them do good."

The shears were brought, and some other children, hearing that old tinware was wanted, brought such a lot that there was a fair prospect of having a whole metal covering for the whole drain. John soon found he could cut tin quite expertly, and began to think a great deal of the tinners' shears. So interested did they become in the work, that Mr. Jones, almost for the first time in years, felt sorry that it was too dark to work longer. He felt tired, and his muscles were somewhat sore after his severe day's work, but he was happy. His text had been with him all day long, and there was a sort of feeling in his heart that a great, great Friend, somewhere in the universe, was saying, Well done. Before going to his rest he went out by the bee-hives again and thanked God for the great new happiness that was coming into his life. He was asleep almost as soon as he touched the pillow. His wife retired a little later, and noted that even on his face when

asleep, there was a hopefulness and peace she had never seen before. It was because God was leading and he was following.

Before night of the next day they had got up into the worst part of the slop-hole. John suggested using the old boots for a covering, to get them out of sight, as well as the broken crockery and tinware; but friend Merrybanks, who was a much-interested spectator, said there was a better place for old boots, shoes, bones, feathers, etc., and all kinds of animal matter, and so they were carried to the manure or compost heap, near the stable. The surface of the rock was here more uneven, and finally, all at once the water spouted right out of one side of this ditch. It poured out into the stone channel, and made a gurgling merry brook as it went down under the bridge. John's father dug out a little where the water seemed to come from, and found a basin of clear white sand, after the mud had washed away, and through this sand the water bubbled and boiled, as if it were water boiling in a kettle.

"A spring! a spring!" came from all hands, and every one had to rush up in spite of the mud and stench from the place, to see this wonderful spring. Friend M. spoke,—

"Look here, neighbor! I have got an oil-barrel, with both heads out, that I think we can fix right over this."

"But it will taste of the oil," said John.

"No, for we will burn the barrel with shavings until it is charred. This will take off the taste and smell, and also prevent it from rotting."

The barrel was fixed, and, after charring, the hoops were driven tight, and nailed. After setting it over the spring, some tough clay was found and spread around the inside, and the same kind of clay tamped solid around the outside. While doing this, a small passage into the stone drain was left for the water. Before stopping this and making the barrel fill with water, some provision was to be made for the overflow. Friend M. said he had a tin eave-spout that he thought would

just reach down to the road by the bridge. While John is despatched to bring it, I shall have to explain that he had, some time before this, built a sort of playhouse for Mary, in a corner of the lot, near the bridge. The roof was simply some boards laid over, and the angle in the fence formed two sides. Well, the tin pipe, when put in place, came out just in front of the playhouse. It chanced to be of just about the size needed to drive into the bunghole of the barrel, and this brought it under ground enough to be out of the way for plowing. After all was fixed, and the pipe covered up, a ball of stiff clay was forced into the channel where the water ran into the drain, and all watched breathlessly to see if the clay was impervious enough to confine the water. The water did not stop in the drain, it is true; but this indicated that the water was coming out of the wet, springy ground, for the barrel was slowly filling up. Very soon it was up to the tin pipe, and as the tin was nicely turned over and tacked to the inside of the barrel, the spring was soon all flowing out through the pipe, and pouring in a little waterfall among the gravelly pebbles down by the bridge, right in front of the playhouse. John, in anticipation of the moment it would come, had one of his old water-wheels supported on a couple of forked sticks, and in "no time" the wheel was spinning like a thing of life, and spattering the cool spring water in a most refreshing way on that hot summer afternoon. At this point Uncle Billy drove along.

"Why, neighbor Jones, have you really found such a nice spring in that wet, nasty place?"

"So it would seem," said John's father, pleasantly, although he remembered vividly about the cow and the honey.

"Well, now, we have just been talking of a trough down in the woods that would fit this place exactly; and if you wish to allow this water to be used as a public watering-place, the

trough is at your service, and my men will bring it over this afternoon."

Mr. Jones was surprised. In fact, *all* were a little surprised. Freddie ventured,—

"Why, are you going to fix it so everybody can just drive right up here and let their horses get a drink whenever they want it?"

"That is the idea exactly, my man," said Uncle Billy. Thus encouraged, Mary looked up into the rich farmer's face and ventured,—

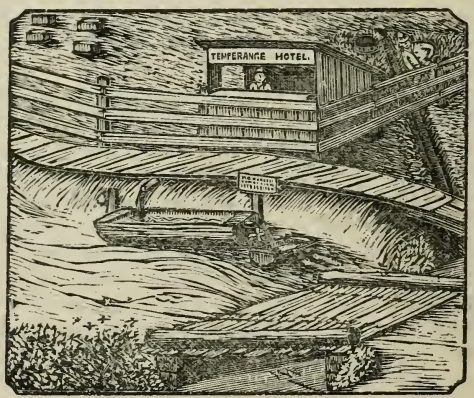
"Hadn't you ought to bring a little trough, so the dogs can drink too?" Her father chided her gently for her presumption, but she had read Uncle Billy better than he, for the reply came,—

"Yes, my girl, we will bring a little trough for the dogs to drink out of, so they won't go mad in a dry time, and you are to take care of it, and keep it nice and clean."

The trough came, with a little one attached to one end. A hole was bored in the end of the large trough, with a hollow plug in it, and through this hollow plug the water fell into the little trough below. That the trough might not get pushed about and injured, the men brought a couple of solid posts, and before they went away the whole was most thoroughly stayed with spikes, and additionally braced to the posts of the fence. It did not take John very long to fix the water-wheel right over the dogs' trough; and, almost before they knew it, half of the little village had gathered about Mr. Jones's new spring. By some unknown means the minister came too; and, after shaking Uncle Billy cordially by the hand, and thanking him for his assistance in the matter, he found a clean, white shingle, which he tacked to the fence, and with a piece of coal wrote on it as follows:—

Ho! every one that thirsteth,
Come ye to the waters, and drink.

Of course, everybody had to look down in that black barrel, and see the white sand bubbling and boiling in the clear spring water; but through it all, Mr. Jones was still busily at work. The drain in the rock, with the flat stones laid over it, and the cut-up tinware laid nicely over them, was not yet filled up. He was just now cutting down the tall rank weeds, and stamping them in the drain, before throwing on the dirt. Even late as it was in the season, he had a plan of raising a crop there before winter, and he was in haste to get the ground dry and ready to plow. I think I shall have to give you a picture of—



THE WATERING-TROUGH BY THE BRIDGE.

After seeing the minister mark on a shingle with a piece of coal, John thought he would try his hand at it, and you will see a sample of his work up over the play-house. On the post by the trough you will see a tin cup hanging. Well, this tin cup has a pleasant history, and, unless I am very much mistaken, it (the history, not the cup) contains something helpful to more than one of my readers. It is too dark to work, and

all the family, except John, are sitting on the log that goes across the bridge, listening to the ripple of the water as it falls from the water-wheel.

The ground was pebbly and sandy near where the water flowed out of the small trough, so there was little danger of its becoming muddy; but back, further up the bank, there was a spot of clay. As there were a great many stones in their garden and corn-field, Mr. Jones was speaking about having them all gathered up and put around the watering-trough, that it might not get muddy for the horses as they came up to drink. While he was planning how he would make a stone-boat for drawing the stone, both from the adjoining roadsides as well as from the garden, John came running up, saying,—

"O father, father! the bees are actually building comb again in the boxes. I thought they were gathering honey in the pail bee-hive, and so I went and looked in them outdoors, and the boxes are full of bees, and you can see the white comb where it sticks out of the cluster. They are just more than scrabbling around and working."

"Scrabbling?" said his mother.

"Well, you just come and see if they don't 'scrabble.'"

"It must be from the peppermint," said his father.

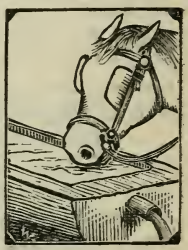
"Father," said Mary, "you do not think Uncle Billy is an 'old curmudgeon' now, do you?"

"No, my child, and I was very wrong and wicked to have spoken so of any of my neighbors." The next sentence was spoken more to his wife. "Can it be possible that this is the same world, and the same people that I knew only last week? Is it really possible the change is in my poor self, and nowhere else?"

CHAPTER XXIV.

Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom —LUKE 12:32.

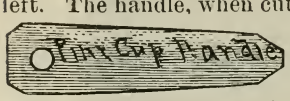
THE new watering-trough was patronized amazingly. John had rigged up a sort of work-bench, down in that play-house that he styled his Temperance Hotel, and he enjoyed so much seeing the horses drink, as they came, a little shyly at first, up to the new trough, that he actually dreamed of seeing horses drinking at night after he had got to bed. The water, bubbling as it did right out of the sandy rock, was always fresh, soft, and cool, and no horse ever refused to drink there, even if he had been watered but a half-hour before out of some muddy, stagnant pool. The tinner's shears had not yet been carried home, and John had become quite expert with them, fashioning things out of the tin he got out of some oyster-cans that had been so recently emptied they were comparatively clean and bright. In fact, he made the tin cup I promised to tell you about in the last chapter, and he became so fond of the business, the passers-by joked him by saying he had better put his sign, "TEMPERANCE TIN-SHOP," rather than "HOTEL." Shall I tell you how he made nice-looking cups out of oyster-cans? Well, he just cut them open near the seams, so as to get a piece of tin 3 by 12¼ inches. One oyster-can made just two such pieces. After the tin was nicely flattened by a little wooden mallet, he marked it out accurately with his father's square, and then cut it exactly on the line with his snips. After this he snipped off every one of the four corners until his tin looked about like this:—



JOHN'S DREAM.

Next, he folded an edge on each of the long sides, where you see the dotted lines. He did this by laying it on the square, with the edge projecting just enough, and then turned it down with his mallet. He did not pound this seam down hard, for he wished it to look as much as possible as if a wire were turned under the fold. One edge was turned over one way, and the other the other. Well, after this was done he folded it around his mother's potato-masher by means of his mallet, so it looked much like a cup without handle or bottom. The ends were slightly curved with the mallet before rolling it up, so they lay on each other nicely, ready to solder. The clipping, as you see, made no seams or folds where the lap came. Neighbor Merrybanks good-naturedly loaned him his soldering-iron, with the understanding that John was to pay for all the solder he used, and keep the iron in good order. You know I said one seam was turned out and the other in. Well, with his father's compasses a true circle was marked out on another piece of tin, and when made just the right size, and cut out, it just pushed into the cup. It would go into the top very well, and when pushed down to the bottom it came solidly against the seam that was turned in to hold it. It came down into place so securely it almost seemed as if it would stay without solder. However, as John's cups were to be useful as well as ornamental, it was soldered securely. Mary and Freddie were loud in their praises of the cup, because it actually did not leak a drop all the while they were eating supper, yet it was left on the work-bench, brim full. Freddie said they bought a tin cup of a peddler, and *it* would not do that.

After supper, a handle was made of a piece of tin that was left. The handle, when cut, looked just like this:—



After he got a cup made so he knew it held exactly a pint, he made a careful pattern and punched a hole through it so it could be hung up on a nail. He also wrote on every pattern the name of it, as you see in the pictures, so no mistake would be made. The edges of the handle were folded, much like the body of the cup; and, to get the right shape to it, he folded it over his mother's rolling-pin, so as to be bent exactly like a cup they had in the house. After he had got one to suit him, by the aid of the patterns, it did not take very long to make another; and, at the suggestion of Mary, this second one was hung on a nail just over his bench, with a little board under it, marked just as you see below:—

Just as they got it nicely fixed, Uncle Billy drove past; and, seeing the children looking up at the cup with such interest and animation, he glanced up too.

"Only 5 cents? Why, I guess a new tin cup is just what I want;" and he took a nickel out of his pocket and handed it over.

"John made it, all his self," ventured Mary, for the success of her plea for the little trough had made her somewhat bold.

"Is that so? Why, where did he get his tools for a tin-shop?"

John, a little shyly, told him they were there on the bench. While Uncle Billy was looking them over and asking questions, the doctor drove up with his boy Tom. Of course, all had to look at the cup. The doctor gave an order for half a dozen, explaining that he preferred it to any he could buy, because John had done all of the soldering from the outside. Solder contains a considerable portion of lead, and as lead is to a cer-

tain extent poisonous, it is very desirable that all kitchen utensils, especially fruit-cans, should be soldered only on the outside. Mary clapped her hands at the prospect of so much money; but John looked a little downcast, because he did not know how he was to get so many bright clean oyster-cans. He timidly mentioned something of this, when Tom interposed. "Why, father, he can buy new sheets of bright tin. I can get some for him when I go to the city to-morrow."

"Yes," said Uncle Billy. "I happen to be acquainted with the tinsmith there, and I will send a line to him, asking him to let you have it as near box prices as possible."

John was troubled still, for the nickel he had just received for the cup was all the money he had in the world. But a brave boy as he was, though, he spoke right out; and at the same time that he thanked them he told them the trouble.

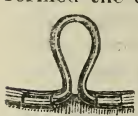
"Why, look here," said the doctor; "here is the money for the six, in advance."

"And here is the money for six more that *I* want," said Uncle Billy. "It is a pity if we can not give the 'Temperance Hotel' a lift when it is just starting out;" and he gave the doctor a look that was understood, as he laughed good-naturedly. Tom took the money, and promised that the tin should be on hand by the next day noon, if nothing happened, and off they all went. John could hardly keep back the tears. What did it all mean? and how was it that even Tom seemed so pleasant and accommodating? His mother told him it was simply the working-out of the promise in the text at the head of this chapter, and that he might reasonably expect people in this world to be willing to help those who are trying hard to help themselves. At a little before noon Tom drove up and handed out ten bright sheets of tin for the sixty cents. After the tin was out, he pulled out of his pocket a clean bright bar of solder.

"Why, where did you get that?" said John.

"Oh! I had a little money left, and I thought you would get out before all this tin was worked up, and so I brought it along. It cost just 30 cents." As John looked a little undecided about getting in debt so much Tom added, "You just lay it in your drawer until you get a lot of cups done, and then I will help you sell them."

John found that each sheet would make the bodies to seven cups, and a half-sheet more would make the bottoms, with scrap enough for all the handles. Before he went to bed that night, the dozen were finished, and tied up with strings ready for delivery. Before noon next day, enough were made and sold to pay for the bar of solder. During all this time John was revolving a plan in his head for making a 5-cent pail, on the same plan as his cup. By the time his bar of solder was all his own, his plan was matured. On one side of the cup is a seam, you know; well, right opposite this seam he cut a little notch in the body of the cup, before it was folded up, so as to have a break, as it were, in this folded edge. Well, after the cup was all made but the handle, he, with a sharp-pointed scratch-awl, raised the fold and slipped in a bent wire, which formed the ears of the pail. The drawing below will show you how the ear was made, and held in position until it could be soldered. The ear was bent from a large common pin, after cutting off the head and sharpening both ends so it would push easily into the fold. A piece of wire made the bail, and then it was all ready for a pint honey-pail, only it lacked a cover. A cover was soon made in this way: He made a band for the rim, just like the body of the cup, only it was but ½ of an inch wide, and had a fold on only one edge. This fold was on the outside, like the cup, but the band was of such size that it slipped right inside the pail until stopped by the folded edge. A plain circle of tin, made as large as the outside diameter of the pail, was soldered on



PAIL-EAR.

this hoop, as it were, so as to project equally on all sides. After the cover was put on the pail, the edge of the tin was rubbed down smooth with his hammer-handle, and the pail was done, only the cover needed some sort of a handle. This was made by folding the edges of a strip of tin, somewhat like the cup-handle, only it did not taper.

JOHN'S PAIL.

Here is the whole pail and cover, just as John made it. Of course, Mary and Freddie were very anxious spectators during the whole; and the minute it was done, all trooped into the house to show the wonderful new tin pail, cover and all. Mary fairly clapped her hands with delight, and John was so excited when he undertook to fill it with water, to see if it would leak, that he dipped his hand into a pan of milk, and then started to the spring after some water, with a basket. To the chagrin of all the group, it leaked, and John had to wipe it dry and go over the soldering again. This was quite a shock to his pride as a workman; and as Freddie was a little inclined to quote his father as a superior workman all the time, John made some pretty big resolves that hereafter *his* pails and cups should never be brought back because they leaked. Mary wanted to carry it over to the neighbors to show, but first stopped to ask what the price would be.

"Five cents," said John.

"Why, the *cups* are worth only five cents, and this is ever so much more work."

"Can't help it," said John. "Ten cents would be too much, and we can't bother our customers with odd coppers in making change. If they are cheap at five cents we shall have the more to make, that is all."

John sat down to the task of making a better one, and one

that would not leak. Mary was soon back, all out of breath, saying,

"Mr. Merrybanks says he wants a dozen just like it to put honey in, and here is the 60 cents."

John was already a man of business, and no mistake; and with the pleasure and joy that he felt in being able to earn money fairly and honestly, there came a little worry about his ability to take care of all the trade that seemed piling in. At this juncture our jolly old friend came up with the pail in question.

"John, you have opened up a streak of business, and no mistake; but, my boy, you must not stick to it too closely. You are tired now, are you not?"

Come to think of it, John thought he *did* feel a little tired.

"Well, it is best to take things with moderation in this world. Where is your father?"

"He, with the horse, is working for Uncle Billy to-day."

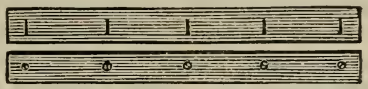
"Well, that is good, isn't it? Now, you see those pails of yours hold just a pound and a half of honey easily, and at present prices it should retail for an even 20 cents. Now, as it is quite a bother for me to run to weigh out honey, suppose you keep a few of these pails full here, and put out a sign, and I will give you 10 per cent commission. Here is a pailful to commence on."

In a twinkling the pail of honey was hung in a conspicuous place, and under it was a board that read like this:

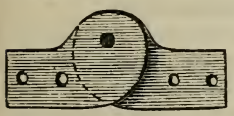
"Now," said neighbor M., "you want some better mode of folding your tin for cups and pails. Haven't you got some little boards here? Freddie, will you run over and get that piece of galvanized iron on the work-bench?"

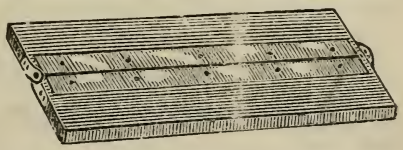
The sheet iron was brought, and from it were cut four strips. 4x14½ inches. At intervals near one edge, holes were drilled

large enough to receive common wood screws. In one of these pieces, the holes were all filed oblong, with a round file, as in the adjoining cut.



Next, two hard-wood boards, 4x15½, were provided. They were laid side by side, and then hung together with a hinge nailed into the end of each board. The hinges were made of the galvanized iron, by riveting one strip to the end of another, as in cut. The small holes show you where it was nailed in the ends of the boards. Now three of the above strips were laid on one of the boards, and screwed fast. The piece with the oblong holes was the center one, and thus by loosening the screws at any time, the width of the fold could be adjusted. The third piece was put on the other board. It was soon done, and looked like this:—





FOLDING-MACHINE.

John found, to his great delight, that he could fold his seams with this by just putting the edge of the tin under the galvanized iron, so quickly that it seemed almost like magic.

"Now," said friend M., "come over in my orchard and get some ripe apples, and play around as boys usually do, and then you can make pails, and five-cent coffee-pots too, if you like."

It is Saturday night again. The family are, as before, sitting on one of the logs that go across the bridge. On the front of the "Temperance Hotel" are hung pint cups, half-pint cups, quart cups, pint pails full of honey, and some not full. John's father has got some money that he has earned himself; so has John's mother; so has Mary, that she got

from selling cups at a commission of "ten per cent." John's father has just repeated the text at the head of our chapter, and asked his wife if it can really be such as he whom Jesus meant when those words were spoken. John's mother reminded him that, as it was Saturday night, he had better take down the things and put them away.

FIVE-CENT COFFEE POT.

"Please let them be up a little longer, mother; I am sure somebody will be along and want something more."

In a few minutes more he came out of the "hotel" with a bound, exhibiting his new five-cent coffee-pot. Here is a picture of it.

Do you wonder, dear reader, that all the little household are happy, and that their faith in God and the future is bright this Saturday night?

CHAPTER XXV.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.—MATT. 7:25.

IT was the next week one morning, that John, as he woke up, heard the sound of rain on the roof. He looked out, and it was rain everywhere apparently; and as he met his mother he remarked,—

"I guess pa won't work to-day anyway, because it rains so he can't."

"But *I* guess he will; and more than that, he has been at work some time." There was a pleasant twinkle in his mother's eye as she said this, and at the same time noted John's look of surprise as he looked over the small house and could see nothing of his father. Dear reader, did you ever see

anybody sit down and complain there was nothing to do when you could see a dozen things that needed doing sadly? And did you ever notice other people of your acquaintance who were *always* busy, and who would find some work to do, even during the few minutes they were waiting for dinner, or at any other similar odd moment? I suspect the reason why some are so industrious, and others are not, is because some are more selfish than others. I here use the word "selfish" in a sense bordering close on laziness; a lazy person is always a selfish one, I believe, although a selfish person may not always be a lazy one, perhaps. Well, one whose heart is full, and fired by the sublime words of our Savior, that so stirred the heart of John's father, can not well be lazy or idle. I will repeat his favorite little text, for you may have forgotten it: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Well, it was through this text that our friend had learned to love work, and to be happier, too, than he had ever before been in all his life, even though he was at the very time fighting against the cravings for tobacco. In fact, I am not really sure he was not happier for those cravings. Do you remember the lines of the little hymn?—

Soul, then know thy full salvation;
Rise o'er sin and fear and care:
Joy to find in every station
Something still to *do* or BEAR.

Well, after John had been sorely puzzled at the queer smile on his mother's face, he all at once thought he heard a strange sort of scratching or scraping. At first he thought it was overhead, but finally decided it was under the floor. His father could not well be under the floor, for there was not room for him, unless he lay down on his face and crawled. He opened the door on the side opposite the storm, and looked under. There was his father, sure enough, scraping out a

place in the dirt, so he could manage to sit up by bending low his head. John was soon under there too, by his side, and very soon, by the aid of the spade, shovel, and hoe, they could both work quite comfortably. It is true, the water started two or three times to run in on to them, from the rain; but by vigorously banking up the dirt it was kept away, and by breakfast time a place was made that would almost do to call a cellar. Did they enjoy it? To be sure, they did: and as John bowed his head while the father asked God's blessing on all the little household at their morning meal, I am sure every one of the four echoed his words from the bottom of their hearts, even though it was a damp and rainy morning. Before noon, John's father struck a rock which proved to be the same one found down by the new spring. The rock was at a depth that made it rather high for the cellar bottom, and John proposed they should split out pieces, and use them for a wall on which to support the building.

"But we are not masons, my boy, and we don't know how to cut stone and lay it up into a wall, even if we had a mason's tools."

"But, father, I know we can do it, if we only try hard; and we can do it rainy days, so it won't cost any thing."

"All right," said his father; "we will do our best at it."

With the spade, a place was cut into the rock, comparatively soft through dampness, right under the center of the house, and in this a post was set, that just drove under the main timber of the house, effectually preventing the tottering of the floor overhead, even if John should get excited and jump up and down at the success of their experiments. They soon found the hole in the rock filling with water.

"Why, father it must be another spring."

"Very likely."

"Oh! I'll tell you! We will just make that drain in the rock, that runs up to the spring, come clear up into the cellar.

and then the water won't do any hurt. Can we not do that, father?"

"I was just thinking of the same thing, John, and I think we can do it." It took a great deal of hard work, but it was done. More than that, a place was scooped out in the rock, for setting pans of milk, and there they had a nice little spring-house right in the cellar.

I suppose it will now be as good a time as any to tell you about the speckled trout.

You see, while Mr. Merrybanks was visiting some friends in Connecticut, he was so much taken up with the beauty of the speckled trout of the mountain streams, that he brought quite a lot of small ones home, and, looking about for a place where they could have fresh spring water, he decided on a spot near to John's temperance hotel, which you saw in the picture a few pages back. A secure dam of stone was made across the brook, and in the center of the little pond thus formed was a tuft of aquatic plants and grasses,—a sort of little island in appearance. Of course, the children all took a very lively interest in the work; and when the beautiful little fishes were set at liberty, their admiration and joy hardly knew any bounds. The fish soon became quite tame, and would come up to be fed as readily as a lot of chickens, when no stranger was near; but at the first glimpse of a strange face they were off under the little island so quickly that no one would ever dream there were any fish at all in the little pond. However, if he came up and stood there a while, pretty soon, to his great surprise, he saw a beautiful fish in the water, where, a second before, there was none, as it came so suddenly and quietly he was half tempted to say it then and there for the first time sprung into existence. In this way, another and then another would all at once start into view, with a suddenness that would lead you to declare most positively they could not have swum out from the weeds in the center island. Well, as little

fishes, like little bees, are always ripe for mischief or adventure, it was not long before they found their way through the subterranean passage, up into Mr. Jones's cellar, and merry times did the children have watching for them by lamplight as they came trooping in one after the other, only to scud around the pans of milk a few times, and then hustle off down to the pond again, through the narrow way cut in the rock. Of course, everybody had to see the speckled trout, and so it transpired that all of Onionville, and some folks who didn't live there, came to see the sight, and were thereby induced to make purchases at John's "hotel." Of course, every one must have a drink out of the tin cup, and then pretty nearly every visitor had to take a cup home just because—well, I really do not know why everybody had to buy one, unless it was because they looked so bright and clean; for John did not make them much faster than people wanted them.

Close beside the little trout-pond was placed a gentle colony of Italian bees, and the sight of the pretty creatures, as they sported in front of the hive, which was nicely leveled up, and banked in front with white sand, was almost as great an attraction to visitors as the speckled trout. A path ran up to the barrel, where one could look in and see the sand still boiling up in the bottom, as the pure spring water came forth from the rock. On either side of this path, and, in fact, over the whole tract of ground that had been the slop-hole, John's father had sown turnips, and planted white beans, as these were the only two crops he knew of that would mature so late in the season. As this garden patch was so plainly in sight, it was kept very cleanly tilled; for, in fact, so pleasant a spot was it that the whole family were frequently out there with their hoes; and Nature, as if in gratitude for their care, smiled with a most luxuriant vegetation. Some way, some flowers got in along the border, and among them were a few spider plants and figworts that somehow strayed across from

friend Merrybanks' premises, and the old slop-hole was truly transformed into a place that the children would have nicknamed the Garden of Eden had not John's mother reproved them.

"But, mother, is it not most beautiful?" said John.

"Yes, my boy, it is most beautiful; but you know the beauty did not come without most earnest, hard work."

"No, indeed, it did not mother; but why did we not have it so *last* summer?"

The mother did not answer; but if we could have looked into her thoughts, I think the answer would have been, that, a year ago, God and the Bible had not yet entered into their little household. The garden and little dooryard were not the only things that had changed, for now the whole family, including both John and Mary, were members of the little church just over the way, and not only had they helped some to pay the minister his salary, but a payment had been made on the old gray horse; and with the amount of work Mr. Jones had found to do with him, the prospect was fair that he would be entirely paid for in due time. All these changes had come in but little more than two months' time, since that eventful Saturday night.

As Onionville is a rather small place for very much trade in a certain line, John found he must make larger articles of tinware to do very much of a business, and these would require expensive tools and machinery. Besides, the vacation was over and he must go to school. John once did offer the suggestion, that he should attend to the hotel, in place of going to school; but a single look from his mother made him drop that idea.

"Is not our boy, with all his skill and ingenuity, to be also one of education and culture?"

"But, mother, I can work at the tinware nights and mornings and Saturdays, can I not?"

"Surely, my son, if you do not deprive yourself of the out-door exercise schoolboys always need."

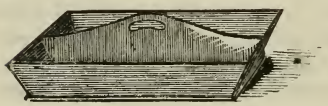
"And you will sell things to folks when they come after them, will you not?"

"To be sure, I will; and days when father does not find work, he is going to make some things of wood that we hope may sell as well as the tinware."

"Oh! what things, mother?"

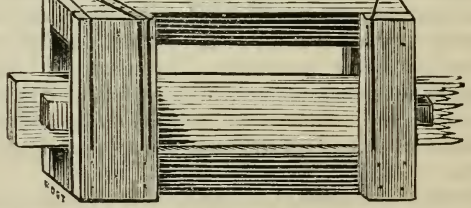
"Well, we do not exactly know yet, but perhaps, when you get home from school to-night, he may show you some of them."

Sure enough, when John got home that night his father had quite a number of knife or nail boxes made up just like the picture below:—



THE TEN-CENT KNIFE-BOX.

The boxes were made of ⅜ basswood, that he purchased at a planing-mill near by, and the cutting-up he did by means of a miter-box that he found described in some old volumes of *Gleanings*, that friend Merrybanks loaned him. Lest you have forgotten it, I give the picture again:—



OLDROYD'S MITER-BOX.

You see he sawed the boards out to the right width, planed one edge, and placed these planed edges all exactly level.

Then they were wedged in the miter-box, which had a cut to give exactly the right bevel and slant, and he could saw a tight joint as easily as he could cut a board square off. This made the side and ends; and when he made the middle piece, that holds the handle, he clamped several boards together, cut the ends in the miter-box as before, and then, without loosening them, he bored three holes through all, where the hand-hole is, cut out the corners, and smoothed the oblong hole with sandpaper. Then the whole were firmly screwed in his vise, and the tops finished down to a pattern, with draw-knife, plane, and sandpaper. After the boxes were all nailed (except the bottom) they were turned over, and the lower edges dressed level; and then a ¼-inch bottom was nailed on, so as to project a little on all sides, as you see. The trays, as he made them, were 8½ x 12 at the top, and 10½ x 7 at the bottom. The sides were 2¼ in. wide. John and Mary started out in high glee to sell them among their neighbors. John took six, and Mary four. John's father was a carpenter by trade, and knew how to do a nice job, and the pretty white basswood, so neatly sandpapered, seemed to captivate everybody's eye. "And only ten cents?" said the people curiously; "why, I am sure I can afford that trifling sum;" and before dark every box was sold, and people were coming to see if they had got any more of those "handy little boxes." Even the one that John's mother had got so tidily placed on end in the pantry, leaning back against the wall, with the forks on one side and the knives on the other, had to be emptied and given to a customer. Friend Jones had worked pretty hard, and got only $1.10 for his day's work, and the lumber he had used had cost 22 cents; but still he felt happy. This lot had been but an experiment, and he knew he could make twice as many the next day, having every thing all arranged as he had. He found it quite a saving to have John do the nailing, as he

could, after a little practice, nail one in five minutes, right along.

One evening at supper, John's mother looked quite tired. Selling the cups, boxes, etc., aside from her other work, proved quite a task, and even her boy was kind enough to notice it, and put in a plea that she should sit down for the evening and take a good rest.

"But, my boy, who will do all the picking-up that has to be done, especially when two romping children have been all over the house after the confinement of all day in school?"

"Do Mary and I scatter things, mother?"

"Oh! I guess not, more than other children do, of your ages." A tear was in her eye as she spoke, for her boy's solicitude had touched her.

"Mother, if we put every thing away that we touch or handle, would it help you very much?"

"I think it would, my boy."

"But," chimed in Mary, "we don't know where to put the things, as mother does."

Here, somewhat to the astonishment of all, the father put in, "Can't I help too?"

Was this really another answer to prayer? thought the mother. She had been sorely troubled about the disorderly ways of her little family; and, if the truth must be told, she had many times been tempted to be cross and fretful at the very thoughtless way in which mud had been tracked in on the floors she had just been at so much pains to sweep and clean. Almost, as a last resort, she had of late been taking these troubles to her Savior, and now, without her having said a word, in some strange way the whole of them were getting zealous about a reform in this very matter.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.—PSALM 23:1.

Has any one ever yet sounded the depth of those words?

"All right, father; you help us, and I know we can make it easier for mother. What shall we do first?"

Mary supplied the needed information quite promptly by saying, "Hang up your hat! there it lies on the floor right behind you."

John whirled around in his chair, almost in surprise, but presently recovered, and said a little shyly, "Well, father's hat is on the floor too," as if that were a sufficient reason why his should be cast right on the floor the minute he came in.

"Why, is *my* hat on the floor? I am *sure* I hung it up as I came in."

"You *did* hang it up," said the mother, "but it dropped from the nail almost as soon as you turned away."

"Well, now I will tell you one of our rules," said the father. "Not only are we all to hang our things up, but we are to do it carefully, and see that they *stay* hung up."

"Father, would it not be a good idea to have all the hats and bonnets hung in one particular place, and have something to hold them, from which they would not slip off? then everybody would know just where to put them, and we would never need to hunt to see where we hung our hats when—"

"The bees are swarming?" suggested Mary.

"An excellent suggestion, my boy; and now I will go down to the barn, and see if I can not make a hat-rack."

It was here evident to the mother (who could catch almost the thought of the children from their faces), that Mary had something to say, so she begged that she might have a hearing.

"It was only this," said Mary; "that if we are going to be so fine as to have a hat-rack in our house, we had better all be very careful to wipe the mud from our feet more than we do, before we come into our nice home."

This sally occasioned a hearty laugh all round, and John began teasing her and pulling her around so much at the idea of a "fine home," that he was in great danger of making his

mother more work in the way of mending dresses, etc.; but his father stopped him.

"John, Mary is right, and we will have a foot-scraper and mat, as well as a hat-rack. Now let us go quietly and orderly to work, all of us, to 'help mother.'"

Down in the barn, near the work-bench, was an old unused turning-lathe; but of late, John's father had rigged it up and fitted in it a little circular saw that he borrowed of friend Merrybanks. He found this helped him quite materially in making the knife-boxes. Well, with the lathe and buzz-saw he soon had the hat-rack made you see here below:—

THE FIVE-CENT HAT-RACK.

The turned pins for the above were 2 inches long and ¾ inch in diameter. The strips were long enough to permit the pins to stand 8 inches apart, from center to center, and of stuff sawed with the buzz-saw, ¾ wide by 3-16 thick. Friend Jones has decided that he can make them of black-walnut, and even then sell them for the small sum of 5 cents. He probably will not get so rich at the business as to get proud, but it will keep him from idleness and temptation, and give him much happiness, which, you know, even money often fails to buy. Just here Mary caught sight of John making some strange motions out on the grass.

"O mother! just see John cleaning his feet."

As he came in he walked up to his mother, "There mother, aren't they clean now?"

"Yes, my boy, very clean."

With mock gravity he goes up and places his hat carefully

on the hat-rack. Although there were seven pins in it, they were all full but one. He came back and sat down by his mother, and she reached over for her little Bible where it lay on the stand, and, opening it, read,—

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

He thought a while, and then, pointing down to his clean shoes, and up at the hat-rack, said,—

"Mother, do you think such work is 'building on the rock,' where mothers are so tired and have to work so hard?"

"I think it is, my boy."

Reader, what do *you* think?

CHAPTER XXVI.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.—Isa. 35:1.

I BELIEVE you have never had a near view of our friend Merrybanks. Well, perhaps I ought to apologize a little for bringing him before you with his hat and overcoat on; but, you see, some of his experiments are working nicely just now, and I wanted you to see him when he looked so bright and animated. It is on a bright and sunshiny Saturday, just before Christmas, and he has been calling to his neighbor, through the telephone they have just got put up and in working order. Mr. Jones made the heads of the telephones on his lathe I have just been telling you about. They are turned out of two-inch black-walnut plank, and something like an hour-glass with both ends open, only the end you speak in is much larger than the other. Across the small end is tacked a piece of very thin japanned sheet-iron, such as can be obtained of photograph artists. A sheet, 10 x 14, costs 15 cents. A wood-

en ring is put over the thin metal, to make it very firm, for it has to hold a very heavy strain, to get the wire as tight as it should be. The two houses are connected by No. 23 annealed brass wire. Brass is better than copper because it is tougher, and will stand a heavier pull, while it is much cheaper, as a smaller wire will answer. No. 23 brass wire is worth about 40 cts. per lb., or, in small quantities, say 10 cts. per hundred feet. The wire at each end is put through a small hole in the thin metal disk, and twisted around a short thick wire, to prevent pulling out. At every one or two hundred feet the wire is supported by loops of leather string, not unlike a common leather shoe-string. The wire must rest in the leather loop, and not be tied tight. When they first put it up, the voice had a harsh grating sound, which John said sounded like ducks quacking. Friend M. said they didn't want "quacks" of any sort in that neighborhood, and so they looked over the line for the trouble. A loose end of wire was found that jarred; and when this was twisted down tight it did better; but still, the voice sounded harsh and wiry. The trouble was found in the wire being too loose, and they did not get a clear, natural tone, until it was drawn so tightly that it fairly made it "sing," as John expressed it. When a great many friends were in, and they wanted the telephone to make a sensation, friend M. used to sing "Only an Armor-bearer," with his powerful lungs, until the little folks over at his neighbor's danced with delight. You know the house now stands on a stone foundation, so they could jump up and down all they pleased, without shaking the stove down, or making the dishes roll off the table.

Well, here is the picture. What do you suppose friend M. is listening to? From away off through the frosty air, and along that slender wire, from out of invisible space, as it were, come the familiar tones of John's father's voice,—

MR. MERRYBANKS TALKING TO NEIGHBOR JONES.

"All right! we will be right over."

"And I am coming too." comes the younger voice of John.

"And so am I; ma says I may," comes in Mary's childish voice. It is this voice that brings that pleasant look on his face that you see, for friend M. loves children. Did I never tell you that he was superintendent at the Sunday-school over at the church? Well, he is, and I guess he is the right man for the place too. Perhaps you would like to know why he wants them all to come over just now. I will tell you. No, I won't either. You may just come along and see for yourself. Friend M. meets us at the gate, and, with the same knowing smile, he ushers us into the house, and then points the way for us to follow him into the cellar. Strangely, he takes no light; and the contrast from the bright sunshine outdoors, with the darkness here, almost makes one feel he is going into a dungeon. After we are all down he shuts the door after us, probably because his good wife has taught him to do so, and then bids us all wait just one moment.

"Why, it must be that he has got a door in the wall, into somewhere," said Mary; "see the light along the cracks."

By this time friend M. had approached the door; and when it was opened, an exclamation of surprise burst from all the

party. A cosy little glass house was there—or at least one side was glass, and the strangest part of it was, that it was full of humming bees. The ground was covered with new soft sawdust, and several 25-cent camp-stools of his own make were placed tastily around, inviting them to take a seat. Up near to the large glass sash, which sloped to the south, and, in fact, formed the whole south side, were two of the same pail bee-hives we saw last summer, and bees were passing out and in as briskly as if it were summer. In the center of the room was a large cluster of bees that looked for all the world like a natural swarm, only that the bees were going to and fro from it constantly. A closer look, however, revealed the fact that it was only a bag of thick ducking filled with sugar syrup, which continually oozed through the cloth in bead-like drops, which were eagerly sucked up by the bees, and carried to their hives. Besides this bag of syrup, there swung, from about the center of the sash, right in the full blaze of the sun, a bee-hive cover containing a little heap of rye flour. On this the bees were as busy as you see them on the soft-maple trees in the spring, and the droning hum at the mouths of the—pails, as bee followed bee with his load of pollen, was funny enough, with a cool frosty air on the outside.

"Why, what makes it so warm?" said Mary finally; "I don't see any stove anywhere."

"It is the sun that makes it so warm, my girl. You see, we have cut off all the cold winds by the glass; and although the rays of the sun come through miles of frosty air, when they alight in this cosy little room they so warm it up that we have a beautiful summer temperature. In fact, after the sun gets up a little higher, it will be so warm I may have to open the ventilator. I often sit here in my shirt-sleeves, and read the bee-journals, even when it is freezing outside."

Freddie, who had just come in, now took up the conversation.

"O Mary! I'll tell you what makes it warm. Pa makes the

air come a long way under ground, and the ground thaws the frost out of it. See?" And he showed them pieces of drain-tile, laid all around the outer walls of the room, just a little below the floor, and covered, so the sawdust would not get into the open joints, by a long narrow box or trough, having holes at intervals along the top. This drain-tile was connected with the cellar drain, which was of tile of pretty good size, and perhaps 200 feet long.

"O pa! light the smoker, and show them how it works."

Friend M. lighted his smoker, and puffed some smoke over the holes in the wooden trough. It could be plainly seen that a little air was oozing out of nearly all the holes. Then he went to the ventilator near the highest point in the roof, and opened it a little. The smoke now showed a strong current outward; and on going back to the wooden trough, each hole sent up a little jet of air.

"Oh, see!" exclaimed Mary; "the bees are all leaving the flour and the bag of syrup, and going into their hives."

"Yes," said friend M., "because our experiments have cooled off the room; but I will bring them out again."

He then closed the ventilator very tightly, and pushed some bits of tissue paper into every crevice around the sash, which soon made it so warm they began to take off their hats, and the bees came out in great numbers, and began buzzing in the sunshine, and finally bumping against the glass.

"There," said he, "you see that won't do. If we should keep them long at this temperature, without a brisk change of air, we should soon have the room smelling badly, and they would leave the hives, and have dysentery. It really begins to look to me as if lack of pure air has as much to do with the cause of dysentery, as lack of pure food. Before I fixed my ventilating apparatus I had as bad cases of dysentery here as you ever saw in the spring."

"Yes," chimed in Freddie, "they made every thing so nasty

that ma had to come down with a basin of soapsuds. Why, they even daubed the nasty stuff on the glass, and lots of 'em fell down and died, and pa couldn't fetch 'em to life again."

I don't know but that Freddie would have let a good many more "cats out of the bag" had not his pa, with a smile, here told him he had said a plenty about it.

"Please, Mr. M., may I open a hive?" and John looked up wistfully into the face of his kind old friend.

"Certainly, my boy; go on."

"Do I need smoke?"

"I think not; the room is warm, and they are pretty full of stores, and building comb. Besides, smoke fills the room unpleasantly, unless one is very careful."

Brood was found in all stages, and the queen was enlarging her circles in a way that might look cheering to any bee-keeper. The hoops of comb were passed around, and examined and approved by all.

"But what do you do on days when the sun don't shine?" said Mary.

"Oh! I don't have the bees work then. I cover the sash with the large straw mat you see out there, and open the door into the cellar, so it does not get very cold. Whenever the sun shines enough to set them working, I take off the mat and close the door."

"Do you not lose some that get on the glass, and do not get back?" said John's father.

"Very few, when the ventilation is kept right. They are rearing lots of brood; and when the sun turns and gets warmer, I hope to build them up so as to get them to swarm by the time I can get a queen from some of our friends in the South."

"Why," said John, "you can raise queens and get them fertilized in here; I'll bet you can."

"You mustn't bet, John; and, besides, won't it be the best

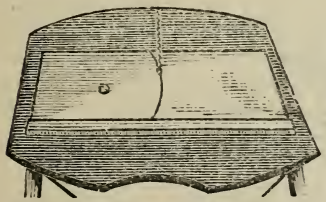
way, to get it done before we say much about it? We have got so far, and it works very nicely, does it not?"

"Yes, indeed it does," came from a chorus of voices.

"Papa," said Freddie, "won't you show them the machine you invented, to make sleds and things?"

"Sleds and things," said John; "what about 'sleds and things'?"

"Oh, you come and see." At this the party adjourned to friend M.'s neatly arranged workshop, and Freddie took them up to the scroll-saw. What they saw was simply a thin piece of board laid on the table, with a strip of wood nailed to one side, and a large screw near one end, put down through into the table. Below is a cut of the table, with the swinging board on top.



MR. MERRYBANKS' SCROLL-SAW ATTACHMENT.

"You will observe," said friend M., "that this device is to avoid the troublesome operation of marking out your work from a pattern, and then trying to make the saw follow the mark by the eye; but, of course, it applies only to work where a great number of pieces are wanted all alike, and are to be cut on a true circle." To show how it could be used, he took a strip of plank and laid it on the swinging table, and in a moment had it cut as in the dotted lines below.

HOW TO MAKE TOY SLEDS.

A tack in the swinging table served as a stop, so that all the

pieces were cut off just alike. Next he unscrewed the machine and cut the round hole you see in half of the pieces, by putting the screw through the center, and then setting it into the table nearer the saw. The board was simply revolved around the screw, and the saw cut the circle. Then the pieces were taken to his foot-power circular saw, and those with holes in were split through the middle, as in preceding cut. To make the pieces for the sled, he had only to take off slices with his circular saw, of the thickness required, and plane them, and the sled was ready to nail up. Mr. Jones planed the pieces, and nailed them up with wire nails, and in a twinkling friend M., with a small pot of paint and a stencil of a horse, painted on that animal, and the name "Racer."

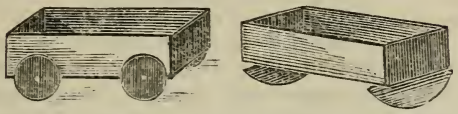
THE SLEDS THAT WERE MADE IN JUST 15 MINUTES.

While the rest were busy at the sleds, Mary and Freddie were looking at some oblong one-piece section boxes that friend M. had ordered in some of his honey-experiments; and Mary, placing one on the sled, suggested that it would answer for a box, so she could draw her doll in it. John here interposed, that, if the box had a bottom to it, the runners could be nailed directly to it, and they could be made so rapidly he could sell them at his "Hotel," just before Christmas, for five cents each.

"Why, John," said friend M., "can't we put some wheels on some of them, and have wagons as well as sleds, for only five cents?"

At this point John's father picked up one of the circles

(you see, the piece that comes out of that opening in the runners just makes a rocker), and broke in,—



WAGONS AND CRADLES FOR FIVE CENTS APIECE.

"Why, look a-here! Just cut these in two, slice them up, and have rockers to put on the boxes, and we have cradles for the doll, as well as sleds;" and while they were busy working out these plans, the doctor and his boy Tom came in, having heard of the success of flying bees in the greenhouse. Tom, you must know, has a little printing-press with which he prints wrappers and labels for his father's medicines, and he suggested that he could print some nursery rhymes on some bronze paper, to be pasted on the "vehicles," to make them sell better for the holidays. The doctor took out his pencil, and began writing on one of the sleds. Tom also took one, and finally all the older ones busied themselves in writing a verse. Friend M. wrote in the bottom of the cradle as follows:—

Rock-a-by baby upon the tree-top,
When the wind blows the cradle will rock;
When the bough breaks the cradle will fall,
And down will come rock-a-by, baby, and all.

Mr. Jones then wrote on the sled,—

Mary had a little sled,
To ride upon the snow;
And everywhere that Mary went,
That sled was sure to go.

John wrote on his (you will note where his mind ran),—

"It was a sled that Mary had,"
The teacher did reply;
"Five cents bought the little thing,
And how is that for 'high'?"

By this time the doctor had studied up,—

"What makes the sled love Mary so?"
They cried in accents wild;
But not a "feller" answered them,
Though every "feller" smiled.

Of course, they had a big laugh; but when Tom came to produce his they laughed still harder. Here is what he had written, and it was pretty well written too; for Tom, with all his faults, had much skill that way,—

Mary had a little sled;
I tell you it was "boss;"
'Twas lots of fun to see it run
As fast as any "hoss."

Right here their merriment was interrupted by Mrs. Merrybanks, who excused herself by saying that a kettle full of maple candy was all ready to be pulled, and "would the men folks be so kind as to come and pull it?" At the same time, she gave the doctor a pleasant smile, and told him he was especially wanted, as doctors are always expected to know better than anybody else how every thing should be done "*ex officio*."

"Can't we help too, '*ex officio*'?" said Mary.

This occasioned another big laugh, to think that Mary had unconsciously said a pretty smart thing; and even if her father did chide her a little about being forward, Mrs. M. took her part so pleasantly that she did not feel very sorry.

"Oh! please, ma," exclaimed Freddie, "can't I go over after John's mother, '*ex officio*'?"

As permission was granted, we will explain, while he is gone, how maple candy is made. About 5 lbs. of maple sugar is put into an iron kettle, with perhaps a pint of hot water. When melted, a piece of butter is stirred in, about the size of a hickory-nut. It is now boiled slowly, until done, which can be ascertained by dropping a little into cold water. When it snaps like brittle glass, it is ready to pull. If not cooked enough, it will be too soft to handle when done; if too much,

it will be burnt. Good dry hard candy is the golden mean between these two extremes. To cool, it was poured into large dripping-pans, perhaps ½ inch deep in each pan, and the pans were then set out in the snow. Of course, the pans were previously buttered. As soon as the candy began to cool it was picked up from the edges, and rolled over into the center, and this process kept up until the whole could be taken up like a roll of dough. It was then pulled until white. If it got too hard to pull, it was taken near the stove; if too soft, in the air before an open door. Each one of the party was given a piece to pull, and now quite a strife sprung up to see whose would be whitest. Of course, the men expected, by their superior strength ("ex officio," John said), to be far ahead; but to their surprise, John's meek little mother was ahead of them all, and Mrs. M. next. After it was pulled out into long slender threads, these were snipped off with shears, just right to go into Mary's little doll-cradle; and almost before they knew it, John had a "wagon-load of maple candy," labeled,—

"**ONLY 15 CTS.**"

At this point Tom fairly boiled over with joy. "Why, John, you just get up a lot of these, and I will print some bronzed labels for them, and we will have out some posters, and advertise them all over the country, and the week before Christmas you will sell *millions* and *millions* of them."

"Yes, sir, 'ee," says John, forgetting for the time how many ciphers there are in the arithmetic in a million; "but where can we buy the sugar?"

"Oh! Uncle Billy has got a big lot of it, for I heard him say he would *never* sell it, if he couldn't get more than 9 cents per pound for it; and next spring you and I will rent a sugar-bush and make our own sugar, and—"

Really, friends, I should like to tell you more what they planned; but I have only time to say, they went into it, and I don't believe any boys ever had a happier Christmas week.

They hired Mr. M. to work for them with his tools, at a dollar a day; Mrs. Jones made the candy; Mary and Freddie nailed up the vehicles and cradles, and pasted the labels on, and at nine o'clock the day before Christmas they counted up their money, and found they had taken in for tinware and all (you see, they sold candy by the pailful as well as wagonful), $19.45, besides having quite a little sugar and other stock on hand, all paid for. Tom sold out his interest to John for $10.00, so John was sole proprietor. In the next chapter I will tell you how Tom bronzed labels, and what the Temperance Hotel did in the month of January. Truly the sad and dilapidated home of John Jones was beginning to blossom as the rose, even in the winter, and the way it got to be the favorite gathering-place for the people of Onionville, under the kind guidance of friend Merrybanks (was it really Merrybanks, or the Lord Jesus Christ whom he loved to serve?) would not inaptly remind one of our opening text.

CHAPTER XXVII.

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.—PSALM 37:25.

AFTER Christmas, things seemed rather dull, and Mr. Jones, for the first time in many weeks, found it hard to get work to do. The roads were bad, and every opening to earn even 25 cents a day seemed to have been closed, for no one got out away from home. All that the surrounding farmers had to do, they did themselves; and there were so many offering to work at the sawmill, at whatever price the owner would give them, during the winter months, there seemed no kind of a chance there. To tell the whole truth, he began to feel a great longing for his pipe during these dull days, and

Satan kept whispering there could not be any thing so very wrong in a simple matter like this, until he was in very great danger indeed of getting back into his old ways. He did very wisely indeed in telling his wife all about it. I hardly think he would have done this had it not been for a very warm friendship that had recently sprung up between the two. I dare say some of the friends may smile at the idea of a friendship springing up between man and wife: but, if I mistake not, there may be others who know something what a friendship of this kind is. Young folks often form friendships (if you will excuse the word) before marriage: but they do not then know each other as they do after a few years of acquaintance amid the sometimes monotonous duties of home life. Well, the great friendship between John's father and mother commenced about the time they formed a habit of kneeling in prayer together the last thing at night, and asking God for all they felt they needed. After both voices had been lifted up to God, each felt a new trust and confidence in the other; and it was after such an exercise that he ventured to tell her he feared he was losing trust in God a little, and also felt a longing for his old tobacco. The Bible soon supplied the little text at the head of our chapter, and her bright womanly faith and trust soon made him feel ashamed of any such feelings. They were all regular in attendance at all Sunday services, and no Sabbath passed without *something* being contributed to the cause of God's work. The utmost economy was practiced in all their expenditures, and so she felt she had a right to plead with her Savior, on the strength of the promises in his holy word. She was but a small, weak, feeble woman; but her faith in God was bright, and she *knew* their prayers would be heard. She did not know, however, after all, and I presume never dreamed, of the way in which God would use those prayers, nor of the cares and trials that would come through the answer to them. Sometimes God sees fit to answer our

prayers so quickly that we are fairly startled. At other times it may be years before it would be best for us to have them answered, or even safe for us. This one came very quickly.

"Mr. Jones, I want you to help me right away, this very morning."

It was Uncle Billy, and he seemed in a great hurry as he stood in the door on that stinging cold morning. The husband and wife exchanged glances.

"All right, sir. What tools shall I bring?"

"Bring all the tools you used in cutting that underdrain in the rock."

"But, isn't it pretty —"

Here he stopped abruptly, because of a look of pain in his wife's face, as she shook her head at him.

"What is it, my man? Out with it."

"I beg pardon, Uncle Billy. I was just going to ask if it is not pretty cold for such work; but I want to take it back, and to say that I will gladly go anywhere, and do any thing you bid me, to earn an honest living."

"Spoken like a man, Mr. Jones. Here is my hand on it, and you just stick to that and we will be friends."

Do you see how near he came to rejecting the answer to their prayers, when it was brought to his very door? Uncle Billy was a man who did not stop long to coax one who was afraid of frost or cold weather.

The work was over on the hill near their home. Mr. Jones did as he was bid, and asked no further questions. Before night, rough blocks of stone were got out; and in rough sheds, hastily built of boards, masons were getting ready to cut them into shape. Mr. Jones was called on in a good many ways at once; and because the business was new to him he got some very harsh, unkind words. But he remembered the prayer of the night before, and also the kind words of Uncle Billy, and he some way felt sure that Uncle Billy would inter-

fere if the abuse went too far. For his part he decided to do the best he knew how, quietly, and trust — yes, trust God to take care of him.

Many surmises were made as to what Uncle Billy wanted of such stone; but to all inquiries he only replied he thought they "might come handy some day." But the question was, Why should he take such a sudden notion to commence such work, right in the middle of winter? As they were gathering up the tools at night, he said, "Mr. Jones, you have had it a little hard to-day; but after the men know you, and you know them, I guess it will be all right." That was all, but it did a great deal of good.

As the weather moderated so the stone could be handled and worked, the new stone-quarry began to be quite a busy place; and as most of the hands from both the quarry and sawmill passed the little house beside the watering-trough, going to and from their meals, quite a little trade started up in tin cups, pails, honey, maple-sugar candy, etc. While John was at school, his mother was obliged to sell the things; and, to make it more convenient for her, John and his father arranged a kind of stand each side of their front door, for the utensils, so they would be in sight from the road. This stand was such as you sometimes see for flower-pots,—a sort of steps, as it were, one above the other. Besides the 25-cent pails for honey, John had made some ½-lb. pails, to be sold full of honey, for only a dime. These he made one Saturday; and as they seemed just right for a lunch, the workmen who carried their dinners took them off in no time.

While Mr. Merrybanks was one day waiting in the city, he came across a stock of small jelly-tumblers, holding just about ½ lb. of honey. By purchasing the lot, he got them for 24 cts. per dozen. John soon made tin caps for these, at a cost of ½ cent, and there they had a glass package for honey, that could be sold at a profit at 3 cents. The whole neighborhood

made a run on them, until every family had one or more of these pretty little tumblers; and after that they allowed 3 cents each for all that were returned. Well, friend M. also found in the city some little tin pie-plates, 6 inches across, that he got so John could sell them at 3 cents, and a larger size for 5 cents. John's mother was an adept in making pies, and it was not very long before a brisk trade had started up on 5-cent pies, and this paved the way for some beautiful light gems (to go with the honey) that the workmen always found smoking hot, just at dinner-time, at the house beside the spring. Two gems and a dish of honey were only 5 cents. Did I tell you they had a fine crop of beautiful white beans, where that old slop-hole used to be? Well, they did; and as there had been no good offer for them, they had not been sold. Altogether, they contrived to fix up some most tempting-looking little dishes of baked beans, each one having a tiny piece of nice pork in it, that just captivated the quarry-workers; and when hot coffee (for only 3c.) was put on the little bills of fare that Tom printed, the workmen, almost in a body, decided to have dinner down at the "Temperance Hotel," instead of either carrying their dinners or going to town. When they got tired of beans and pork, Mrs. Jones gave them "hulled corn" in such good-sized dishes, and so daintily cooked and served, that one of her customers told her she would lose money in furnishing them a dish like that for five cents.

After some talk on the matter, he told her he had quite a family, and they had hard work to make both ends meet. He had told his wife he could get a good dinner of corn and beans for 10 cents, and they could not understand how it could be done. Mrs. J. told him smilingly to buy a bushel each of corn, beans, and wheat, and she would show him how to cook them so that 10 cents would come pretty near paying for the materials for his whole family.

Just here friend Merrybanks came in with samples of ma-

ple sugar and molasses that he had been making during the month of February.

"Surely," said Mrs. Jones. "this is honey."

"No. it isn't honey. Taste it."

A small dish of it was given to all present, and the exclamations of surprise and pleasure were satisfying. Each one declared it to be the most beautifully flavored sweet that had ever passed their lips. The sugar cakes were about as white as cream, and had this same wonderfully fine flavor, reminding one of buds and blossoms, and possibly of their earlier days, away back in the woods on the old farm.

"Now," said our friend, "I have long had the idea, that as much or more progress is possible in making maple sugar and syrup, as in getting nice honey, and a nice price for it. This cost me a good deal, it is true; but I just wish to leave these samples here, and let your customers taste of them. The syrup you are to sell the same as you do honey, which will be about $1.50 per gallon, and these little two-ounce cakes, for 5 cents, which will come to about 40 cents per pound, you are to have one-third for selling."

I need hardly say, that, even in that little community, both sold readily, while the ordinary dark sugar and syrup sold slow, at usual prices.

It was Saturday, toward evening, after a mild day, very near the first of March. They had stopped work early at the quarry, as they usually did Saturday, and, at John's urgent request, his father and mother were going over to the sugar-camp. Mrs. M. was to go too, and the children were just boiling over with fun and merriment, as only good school-children can "boil over." It was an unusually pleasant day for the season, and even the mosquitoes were buzzing about. As Mr. M. had a pretty fair roadway made down to the woods, their walk was a very pleasant one. Before they got fairly into the woods, they heard some one singing. It was our old

friend; and as they stopped a moment to listen, they recognized the familiar words, "Only an Armor-bearer," that he was in the habit of singing through the telephone.

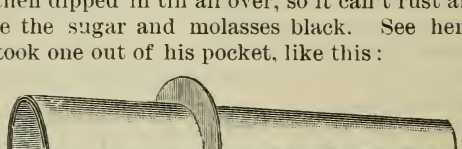
"Mother, mother!" said John, "don't you see? He has all of his sap-pails covered with wooden covers, so there can't a bit of rain-water, or a leaf, or bug, get into the sap; and, don't you see, some of the covers are painted white and some red? Well, now just look here!"

At this, John approached a tree, and lifted the cover, showing that one side was white and the other red.

"Look, mother, when he has emptied a pail, he turns it the other side up; see? and, you see, he knows just how many pails he has emptied, and he can't skip any. Isn't it funny?"

"And just see, too, mother," said Mary, "he has these little short sap-spiles that go right through the side of the pail, so not a particle of sap can spatter over or get blown away by the wind."

"Yes," said Freddie, "and the spiles are made of double tin, and then dipped in tin all over, so it can't rust anywhere, and make the sugar and molasses black. See here!" and Freddie took one out of his pocket, like this:



MR. MERRYBANKS' SAP-SPILE.

They had now got near the boiling-house; and as pails were scarce, a few tin pans were used, where they could be emptied often. One small tree had only a 5-cent pail hung to the spout, and Freddie volunteered the information that this was his tree, and that it would run a pailful in just an hour, for a spell in the forenoon. His mother suggested he should pass

the sap around; but he replied they would take the dipper and go down to the "old sweet tree," for there was one tree sweeter than any other in the woods. I told you once before (Chap. XIV.) how nicely friend M. kept his sap-pails and all his tinware. The sap from this tree was relished and praised by all, after their rather long walk.

By this time they were near friend M., who was gathering sap on a sort of sled, or stoneboat, carrying a clean tin can, covered so no sap could slop over. They noticed his pony was trained to go over a particular path, and that he made him go on, or stop, by simply talking to him, very much as he would talk to a person. In fact, the pony looked and acted as if the sugar-camp belonged to his horseship, and as if he was proud to have visitors admire it; and I don't know but that such was the case; for, in truth, he had helped to make almost every thing about it.

THE WAY MR. MERRYBANKS EMPTIES HIS SAP-PAILS.

"O pa!" said Freddie, "mayn't I show them how he likes sap?" Permission was granted, and the pony plainly showed, by pawing and nodding his head, that he knew that sap is good, as well as anybody. Shall I show you how friend M. empties the sap, without lifting the pail at all?

I really can't show you the painted cover to the pail, for Freddie has got it, very busily explaining to Mary how it is made of three thin boards, with the grain crossed to prevent warping. The middle one is a little larger than the two outside ones, and this makes it fit down into the pail so the wind can not blow the covers off. These covers can be made very cheaply at a cheese-box factory.

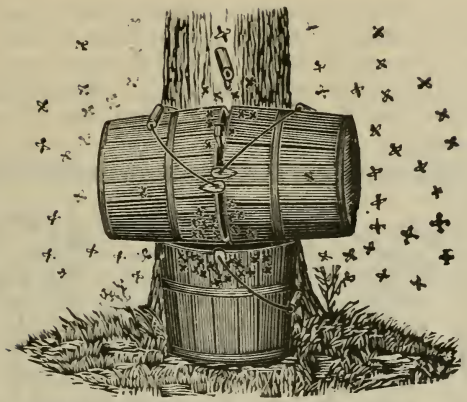
"Listen!" said some one. All stood perfectly still. The most apparent sound was a musical tinkling, produced by the sap dropping into the pails, all over the woods. Some of the pails had just been emptied, and the drops, striking on the tin bottom, made a comparatively loud note, while the dull thud, and bubbling sound of those nearly full combined to make a pleasant music. As it echoed through the woods, more than one heart in that little company was raised in thankfulness to God. But John interrupted,—

"Hark! I hear bees; I know I do."

There was a twinkle in friend M.'s eye as he suggested, "Don't you think you imagine it, John? Perhaps you have got 'bee on the brain,' and that is what makes the buzzing."

"No, sir," said John, with vehemence; "I know I hear bees." At this he started off; and as he looked behind a large maple-tree but a little distance off, he fairly danced and shouted for joy. He didn't shake any thing off the table this time, for he stood on solid ground. Of course, the rest were soon on the spot, and the picture on the next page is what they saw.

Sure enough, there was the pail bee-hive that had stood in the greenhouse; but they had been built up so that two pails instead of one were required to hold them all. The sap was conducted on to the comb; and as it dripped down through, the bees ordinarily took it all up; but during the best part of the day, if it was quite a favorable one, it would come too fast for them, and drip into the upright pail below. This pail was



MR. MERRYBANKS' COMBINED BEE-HIVE, SAP-PAIL, AND MAPLE-SUGAR EVAPORATOR.

furnished with a full set of combs, also, so that the sap dropped into these combs, and could be taken up by the bees at their pleasure. The colony was so strong that the bees clustered, in warm weather, clear down into this third pail also, so you see they were well prepared to take all the sap a large tree would furnish. You will observe he has here in this case used pails, without even removing the bails.

"Why, husband, why did you not tell me of this before?"

"Well, I did not know how it would work, for one thing; and for another, I thought you could see it better than I could tell it, could you not?"

"Why, Mr. M.," said John's mother, "you do not mean to say that nice syrup and sugar came from this bee-hive?"

"No, it did not; it was made in the pan I will show you presently. I expect to get nicer maple syrup from this hive than any thing that has been seen yet."

Just here. Tom, the doctor's boy, came with some labels he had been printing for John's 10-cent pails of honey. John thought he would like some kind of a picture on the labels, and Tom thought he could engrave it. Here is a picture of the sample label he showed them, and the words he had printed under it.

THE LABELS TOM PRINTED FOR JOHN.

Of course, there was a big laugh all round at "Tom's picture," and after they had laughed, they went up and had some warm sugar. If I should tell you how they got some snow, and made wax, and all that sort of thing, I am afraid it would make you feel bad because you were not there too; so I think I won't say any thing about it.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Let all things be done decently and in order.—I. Cor. 14: 40.

TOM'S printing-office was a sort of shed adjoining the doctor's office; and, in fact, it had been used as a coal-shed until Tom petitioned to have it for *his* office. Tom had a very good mother, and, while I think of it, it occurs to me that almost all the mothers in Onionville were good women. Is such the case in your neighborhood? Well, Tom was naturally rather neat in his habits, or, at least, folks said so; but it may be, after all, that it was the effect, greatly, of his mother's early training. A lot of boys proposed, one night after school, to go and visit his office. Tom agreed, but it was evident from his manner that he was not greatly pleased with the idea. When rallied in regard to his not giving a very cordial invitation he replied. "Why, the truth of it is, boys, my office, even if it *doesn't* amount to much, is clean and in nice order; and if you all go in there with muddy feet you will make me a lot of work scrubbing it out again; and folks who pick up things and handle them, very often make me a great deal of trouble."

This raised a big laugh. "Why, how do you ever expect folks to trade with you, if they don't ever go into your office?" said one.

Tom looked a little embarrassed, but finally replied, "Why, I supposed you were going only for the fun of it, and customers do not often come to my office in a big crowd."

John here interposed, that they would all clean their feet so nicely that no one would know they had been there, from the looks of the floor; but Tom was a little incredulous as he glanced at the great heavy muddy boots of the greater part of them. However, they went to a nice grassy plot, and, under

John's supervision, they cleaned their feet pretty well; and as a sidewalk went clear up to the office, they got in without soiling the clean sanded floor very much. As it was rather cool weather, Tom asked them all to be seated on a bench at one side of the room, and told them he would make a fire. At this a boy, whom no one liked very well, jumped up and exclaimed, "Oh! I'll build the fire, and you can go on with the printing."

"No," objected Tom, who was getting a little nervous, "you don't know how. I would rather do it myself."

Tom meant by this that Bob didn't know how he himself managed to build fires, and how he preferred to have it done; not that he did not know how to start a fire in a stove, in a general way. How many misunderstandings come out of just such trifles, and how often we hear people declaring they have been abused and insulted, when nothing of the kind was ever thought of!

"Do you mean to say, sir," said Bob, all in a blaze, "that I am a fool?"

Here the rest interposed, and told Bob to sit down and let Tom do as he pleased in his own shop. Tom also explained that he objected, because people usually dropped coal and shavings on the floor, and that it was more bother to clean up after them than to do it himself; but as Bob still declared he could do it as well as anybody, Tom consented to let him try, and the rest all watched while he did it. Back of the stove stood a pail of coal, and also one of short sticks and shavings from the sawmill. Bob opened the stove-door and pushed the unburned coals back and made a good place for the kindlings; and in doing so he blackened his fingers and the wristbands to his shirt in a way that would certainly make his mother much work. He next, with both hands, took a great lot of shavings from the kindling-pail, and placed them in the stove; but as he raised them out of the pail, the fine shavings dropped over

the sides, and sprinkled all the way from the pail to the floor. As this raised a big laugh, he declared there couldn't anybody put shavings in the stove without letting at least a little dust (?) get on the floor.

"Shall I show you how *I* it?" said Tom.

"How *do* you do it?" replied Bob.

"Just this way;" and, suiting the action to the word, Tom took the pail of shavings, held it up to the door of the stove, and put in the handful without the possibility of a single fiber dropping. "Besides," resumed Tom, "you have put in about four times as much as I do; for I find it no light chore to bring it from the sawmill."

Bob next undertook to put in the coal; but as the coal-pail was nearly two yards from the stove-door he had to travel back and forth with each shovelful; and before he had the stove well filled, little bits of coal had fallen off the shovel, making the floor look quite untidy. To make matters worse, in walking back and forth he had stepped on these little bits, and ground them into powder and into the floor. He also, in putting in the last shovelful, bumped it against the stove-door, and quite a lot of coal fell on the ledge of the stove. The boys laughed, but Tom was getting pretty nearly angry.

"Why did you not carry the coal-pail up to the stove-door, as I showed you?" said he.

"Why, that was the way you said put in kindling. I'll leave it to the rest, if you said a word about putting in coal that way. You needn't be so nice about your printing-shop. A little coal on the floor doesn't do any hurt, any way."

Just at this moment his eye rested on a clean new little broom hanging up against the wall, and beside it a pretty little dust-pan. The broom had a ring screwed in the top, and hung by it on a stout screw put into the wall. "Here; I can sweep it all up for you in no time." He first swept the floor; and in so doing he scattered the bits of coal further,

and crunched more of them under his boots. After this was done, he noticed the coal on the stove-ledge; and in sweeping this off he got it all over the floor again, and mashed some more under his feet. When he got done he put the dust-pan in the sink, instead of hanging it on its nail, and stood the broom up in a corner. The new white broomstick was also marred by the sooty marks of his fingers. By this time he was ready to light the fire: but in getting a match out of the neat little match-safe he knocked them down and spilled them all; and in picking them up he left three or four that he did not happen to see. Back of the stove was a clean place of whitewashed wall, and on this he scratched his match, instead of on the sanded surface on purpose, on the match-safe. A long black streak was left on the wall; and as the phosphorus flew off and didn't light the match, he threw it on the floor and tried another. The fire was finally lighted, and Bob turned round to see what all the rest were looking at. Tom, after glancing at things, put the dust-pan and broom in their places, picked up the good and bad matches, looked ruefully at his floor, and then resumed his work with the presses. My friends, are you *sure* you know how to build a fire any better than Bob did?

You may think I am needlessly particular in going into all these little details; but, my friends, it is these little things that make the difference between eternal life and eternal ruin. A world of unhappy people are to-day drifting about with nothing to do, or working at very small pay, just because they started and went through life like poor friend Bob. A boy who will build a fire, and put away every thing so carefully you would not know a "boy" had been about, I could easily pay a dollar a day, where I could not give over fifty cents to one who goes to work at every thing as Bob did. In fact, to tell the plain truth, if I had no regard for the poor boy's future I would not have one like Bob in our establish-

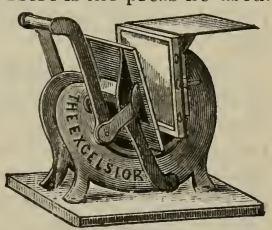
ment at any price. We all like neat, clean, and pleasant homes, and pleasant places of business: and it is right we should like them, for no one can do nice work in a disorderly place. You need not tell me that children can not be taught to be orderly and accurate, or that they do not enjoy themselves better when so taught, for I have have had about as much experience with them as anybody, and I do not believe they think me a hard taskmaster either.

The matter of the fire being now nicely arranged, Tom was requested to print something, just to show them how he did it. He had only one job on hand, and this was some cards for the superintendent of their Sunday-school. John and one other boy were the only ones of those present who were Sunday-school scholars. This is what was to be on the card:

Jesus, teach me not to swear:
This shall be my earnest prayer;
All day long, at work or play,
Jesus, teach me what to say.

As a printed copy was given him, Tom had little trouble in setting it up, so it read just like the original. After he had pronounced it all right, the copy was given the rest to read, until all agreed it was exactly right. Here is the press he used.

After the type were fastened by means of little blocks called "furniture," exactly in the middle of the iron frame called a "chase," several sheets of blank paper were fastened over the "tympan," or part that moves up against the type, and a very little ink was then rolled over the face of the type. The first impression would, you see, be right



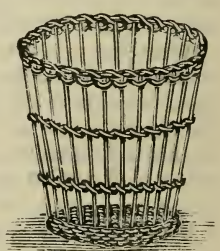
TOM'S PRESS.

on these sheets of paper, and it was then easy to see where to stick some pins, against which to rest the cards, that they might be printed exactly in the middle, and square. After several times trying, the "register," as it is called, was right. Now, it was found that some of the letters were not as clear and plain as others. This was adjusted by changing the impression a little, by means of the proper screws, and then Tom took down from a shelf a pretty little paper box, that, when opened, was found to contain nice little cards, put up in bundles of fifty each, with a little paper band around each. Did you never notice how nice and clean such goods are when they come from the factory? You may think your hands are pretty clean; but if you rest even your fingers on one of these snow-white cards it leaves a mark, and the card is spoiled. How easy it is to make mischief in this world, and without any intention of so doing, either! Bob found it out; for almost as soon as the cover was off the box he picked up one of the bundles of cards, soiling wherever his fingers touched them, tore off the neat little paper band, and threw it on the floor.

"Look 'e here, old feller," said Tom, "we don't throw things on the floor in this shop, I would have you understand."

"Why! just that little bit of paper? I should like to know what you can do with it."

"Why, it's waste paper, and it goes into the waste-paper basket." And Tom pointed his finger to a pretty little basket, made of willow. Would you like to see it? Here it is.



TOM'S WASTE-PAPER BASKET.

Bob looked around at the rest; but as no one seemed to think he had any just

cause for complaint, he picked up the little scrap of paper and placed it in the little basket, saying, "May be there is something else you would like to have a fellow do."

All were good-natured by this time, and Tom very quietly said, "Yes, Bob, there is one other thing I should like you to do. Will you do it?"

"I will if I can; talk it out."

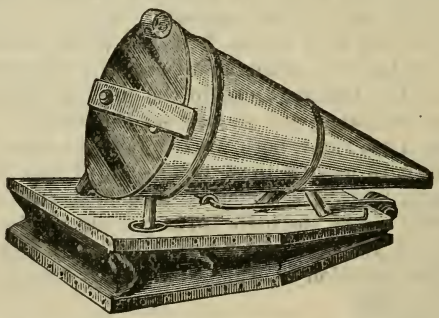
"If you are going to help me print, wash your hands, and make them so clean they won't leave a mark on a clean card." Bob did it: and as the rest were all watching him, he actually hung the towel on the right hook, put the soap back in the soap-stand, and rinsed out the new tin wash-basin, and hung it up on the nail where he found it. After trying his finger across a clean white card, to be sure it would not soil it, Tom allowed him to finish one pack of cards in gold bronze. The cards for this purpose were of a steel blue, as it is called, to contrast better with gold. An ounce of bronze, costing only 15 cents, will do for a great number of labels. It is dusted over the print just as it comes from the press, while the ink is yet fresh and sticky, a ball of soft cotton being used to put it on with. The bronze sticks to the ink, but falls right off from the smooth paper, and so we have the words in "letters of gold." If I am right, both the two boys who were at work on that little card needed those words, and it may be the superintendent's little verse in letters of gold started good seed that day, even before the little cards got out of the printing-office. Would you like a few of those cards, my friend? Well, you just mention it, when you are writing us, and we will send you some.

Bob enjoyed the work so much that he declared he was going to work hard and earn money, and have one too. When he asked the very cheapest that any kind of a printing-press could be had for, Tom showed him a picture of one for only a dollar, that would print a card very well. It was very soon

arranged that Bob should help him in the office at 5 cents an hour, until he could buy it.

At this point, some of the boys overhearing something about some new things that Mr. Merrybanks had just invented, the whole lot started off to go and see them. The boys all knew he would readily show and explain every thing to them, if they only asked him, and so the proposal met with favor at once, as soon as Tom could put away his bronze, wash his type, and put every thing in apple-pie order. In answer to a question, he replied that he usually washed his type with benzine; but that when he wished to get it real clean, he used concentrated lye, which he kept always ready for use, in a little black jug under the sink.

The first thing that pleased the boys was a new smoker friend M. had just got. It cost him only 50 cents, and yet it was lighted with a match, and would throw smoke like a little fire-engine. Here is a picture of it.



MR. MERRYBANKS' FIFTY-CENT SMOKER.

The next thing John wanted them to see was a little fence to put before the entrances to the bee-hives, that would let the worker-bees through, but not the drones or queens.

Friend M. had got this from the great bee-man of Canada, Mr. D. A. Jones. As John was not quite able to explain it fully, Freddy volunteered to read all about it to them in the *American Agriculturist*, and this is what he read :—

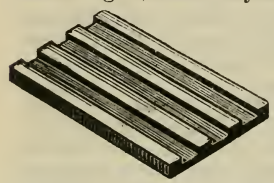
At the meeting of the National Bee-Keepers' Society, at Lexington, Ky., Mr. D. A. Jones suggested a way to control, in part at least, the mating on the drone side. This is accomplished by the use of perforated zinc as entrance-guards to the hives. These guards are ten inches long, and each guard is a box with the bottom and one side removed. A cross-section of the box is one inch square. The holes in this zinc are rectangular, 5-32 of an inch wide by 9-16 long. The zinc occupies about as much space as that occupied by the holes; that is, about one-half of the metal is cut away. These holes, while they permit the workers to pass freely through, are a perfect bar to the drones and the queen. Now, by placing this guard with the wanting side against the end or side of the hive, before the entrance, we have a perfect barrier to the drones and the queen, while the workers may pass with freedom.

JONES'S BEE-GUARD.

HOW TO USE THE GUARDS.

By placing these guards before the hives, in our own and near neighbors' apiaries, we may preclude the flight of all such drones as are not desired to meet the queens. Of course, if there are wild bees in the vicinity, as is always the case if there are forests near by, then this method is only a help, not a sure preventive, of undesirable mating. A still better way to use guards is, to let the drones fly from all but the very best colonies on such days as there are no young queens to fly out, and about one or two o'clock put all the guards at the entrances of the hives, and at night, when the bees are in their hives, kill the drones. The drones should always be kept down, either by this method or by cutting out the unhatched drone-brood, as they consume a great amount of honey, and are expensive and worthless appendages to any hive. I permit drones in my choicest hives only.

John's father here came over to show something he had studied up, and to ask friend M. to help him study up machinery for making them rapidly. They had wintered their bees all right, like everybody else, you know, and so they were thinking of selling bees. Here is the board he had in his hand.



GROOVED BOARD, FOR FASTENING MOVABLE FRAMES FOR SHIPMENT.

You will notice the strip of board has three grooves in it. Well, suppose such a board were slipped into each end of a three-frame nucleus hive. If the grooves were just the right depth and width, the frames would slide right down in them, and then they would be a fixture, so far as any possible shucking about is concerned. To fasten the frames of a whole colony, six such boards are used, putting in 9 combs instead of 10. These boards do away with all wedges, or mashing bees, and the frames can be pushed down into these grooves, when covered with bees, almost as easily as they can be hung in the hives. Where bees and combs of brood are to be sent in a shipping-box, without any hives, these boards form the end of the shipping-box—thin stuff making the sides, and wire cloth covering top and bottom. They decided that, with machinery, they could make boards like the one in the picture for 3 cents each, or $2.50 per hundred.

"O Mr. Merrybanks!" said Mary, "how did the bees get along making honey out of the sap?"

"Why, my little girl, they got along pretty well, only they found the 'feed' a little '*thin*'."

"And, oh! don't you believe?" said Freddie, "Uncle Billy is going to build a mill with all those stones at the quarry."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings: he shall not stand before mean men.—PROV. 22:29.

IT was six o'clock in the morning, and the Jones family were gathering around the breakfast-table. A year ago they did not have breakfast at six o'clock, unless, indeed, it was for Mrs. Jones to get some sort of a cold hasty bite before she went at her washing, and then the children and her husband came stringing along for their breakfast whenever they felt inclined. The breakfast, take it altogether, was an uncomfortable affair, and seemed to all parties a sort of necessary evil. The children were seldom half dressed, and I fear many times would not have had their faces washed had not the poor mother insisted on it. Mr. Jones used to wash his face, I believe; but as he seldom got up early, he did not feel very well pleased with himself nor anybody else, and the feeling that he had probably hindered his wife by his being so late in getting up did not help matters very much. As his pipe seemed the best thing to rouse him up and make him forget these uncomfortable feelings, he usually hurried through with his meal so he could get hold of that. Thank God, it is not so this bright spring morning: for although it is only six, as I told you, all are up and dressed, and looking pleasant, tidy, and happy. Mrs. Jones isn't tired, because they have all helped her bear the burdens of the breakfast. You might think Mary is rather young to be up so early: but as she goes to bed about as soon as it is fairly dark, she has about as much sleep as she used to have the old way. The goods they keep for sale are already out on their stands each side of the door, and it would be nothing strange if they should have a customer before they get quite through with breakfast. In

that case, neither the father nor mother would have to get up, for Mary and John would be on a strife to see which should wait on the customer first.

They take their seats at the table, and yet no one makes any movement to help himself to the food, nor even so much as move a dish, for that matter, for God's blessing must first be asked over the morning meal. In this little feature alone there was a wonderful difference over the old way. It is true, that ofttimes some one of them was unavoidably hindered; but if the hindrance was not to exceed a few minutes, all hands sat and waited. If breakfast was not quite ready, Mr. Jones had a way of reading in the *Sunday-School Times* about the lesson for next Sabbath, and who shall say his time was wasted? Very often he struck some bright thought (did it ever occur to you how easily one catches bright thoughts after his face is washed, just before breakfast?) that made the theme of discussion for all at the morning meal. The words he usually used in asking a blessing were often homely ones; and many who have a better command of language than he had, might have smiled at such common-place words; but they were his own, and the best he had. As nearly as I can tell, it was something like this:

"Our Father who art in heaven, we thank thee for this happy little home thou hast given us, and for this our morning meal. May thy blessing rest upon the food before us, and may thy loving care be with us all, through all the duties and tasks of the day. Amen."

It was so short and simple that no one ever wearied of its length, and yet the words, so few and plain, were such that all could mentally assent, even if they did not outwardly say amen. The Jones family did not always feel pleasant about every thing early in the morning, any more than the folks do who live at our house or your house; but the thought of this simple little blessing was a check, even before it had been

pronounced, and the memory of it was a check after it had been pronounced.

During the meal the subject came up as to what should be planted on their little patch of ground this season. Perhaps nothing had brought them so much money as the crop of white beans, for the 5-cent dishes of baked beans had got to be an established article of trade with the men working on the new mill. It was decided that every foot of ground must be made to produce something; and then Mr. Jones remarked, that they must make the ground rich, and to that end a compost heap was to be started, and every scrap of every thing that could be converted into manure was to be put on it, even to the soapsuds and dish-water.

"O mother!" said Mary, "Mr. Merrybanks has got a peach-tree right near the house, and they always pour soapsuds around it, and it bears a bushel of peaches every year, and it's only a little tree too."

"Oh, yes!" said John, "and he carries all the ashes and puts around the rest of his peach-trees, for he says it keeps the worms away. Right close to the ground, he showed me where they ate into the bark, and made the gum run out: and he said if we kept ashes around the roots, there would never be any gum there; and, O father! don't you believe he has some nice peach-tree honey!"

"Yes," said the father, "and we must have some peach-trees around our place, and some raspberries and strawberries; and, if mother is willing, we will go right about it this morning."

Inasmuch as they all declared they liked to raise berries, pick berries, and eat berries, it was decided their little plantation was to be devoted to fruits, bees, vegetables,—

"And tinware!" suggested Mary.

By this time, as all had finished their meal, the father took the little worn Bible and read a chapter, concluding with the

little text at the head of our talk to-day; and as they all knelt, he asked God to bless their work, and help them to be diligent, not only with their bees, fruits, and vegetables, but also in following his law as laid down in the book they had just read. After this, all were ready for work, and it wasn't quite 7 o'clock either. Who shall say it was time wasted? They were simply beginning the day "decently and in order," as directed in our little text of the last chapter.

CHAPTER XXX.

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.—MATT. 20:27.

PERHAPS no one in Onionville was more astonished than John's mother, when first told there was talk of having her for postmistress. God had been sending blessings day by day, it seemed, almost from the very time when she was led by the little Sunday-school book to hunt up and read her long-neglected Bible. It was not only that she read the Bible, but that she put its teachings into practice: and although she had never thought of it, she had been unconsciously, in her humble way, following her Savior by serving, or becoming a servant of the people of the neighborhood; she had also been happy in this quiet service, for it was serving the Master all the same, even if she was not aware of it. Do you remember,

For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in?—MATT. 25:37.

Not only was her Savior aware of it, but the people round about were beginning to observe her faithful, honest, careful ways, and thus it came about that they preferred to trust their mails in her hands, rather than any other in the whole

neighborhood. The spirit of Christ can not be hid; and when any one says to himself he is going to be a Christian in his own way, and not have anybody know it, he will assuredly fail. It can not be done; for if you are faithful, even moderately so, people will find it out, and you will be sought out and wanted in a multitude of ways.

Of course the postoffice was a great help to the pie and tinware trade, and pretty soon the combined efforts of the whole family were insufficient to keep a stock of goods on hand. At this crisis of affairs the matter was talked over with friend Merrybanks, as he was always as much interested (or a little more if possible) as if it were all his own instead of his neighbors'.

"Now, I'll tell you what," said he, after a little thought. "There is Aunt Lucinda, who is trying hard to support herself by doing every thing she can find to do, and she will help to make the pies; and if she can't make the small tinware, and drive nails enough to make knife-boxes and such like, why, then I'm mistaken, that's all."

Here he began feeling in his pockets for something.

While they were talking, a man came in and wanted three pies and half a dozen boiled eggs, put into a paper bag, so he could carry them handily where he was going to work. Mary waited on him; but as all would not go into one paper bag, she put them into two, and, some little time after the man had gone, one of the bags was discovered right where he set it down to make change.

"It does seem strange," said Mr. Jones, "that people will so often buy things and go off without them."

Mr. Merrybanks, without answering, directed John to take the bag and hasten after him; but as he had gone some distance, John had quite a run to catch him; and as he jolted the bag in running, the eggs broke through and had to be picked up and delivered to him in any thing but a presenta-

ble condition. John stubbed his toe besides; and when he returned, out of breath, he was ready to take up his father's remark, and declare that anybody who forgets to take the things he pays for ought to go without them. "I am sure *I* don't want to chase after them," remarked he.

"Look here, my boy," said neighbor M., "did you never forget any thing after you had paid for it?"

"I know of one or two things he forgot, that he *didn't* pay for," chimed in Mary, with a twinkle in her eye.

John hung his head a little, for he knew he was the most forgetful one of all of them. Neighbor M. went on,—

"If you wish to build up a great business, John, and I really hope and pray you may, your first lesson to learn is, to be servant of the people. Your customers honor you with their patronage, and it is your place to repay them with the kindest attention and civility you can give them. Look after their needs, minister to their wants, and 'chase after them,' by all means, when a few steps of yours may save them a great many steps, or, possibly, the loss of a dinner for which they have paid. You are to feel yourself their servant, and that your very bread and butter depends on your serving them well and faithfully. There are two little verses that I think I shall have to get our friend Tom to print on some cards for me. Shall I tell you what they are?"

"Oh, yes! do," said Mary. "and I will find where they are in my testament."

Here are the verses he repeated:

> But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.

"May I say a word?" said John's mother.

"To be sure," said they all, for Mrs. Jones rarely spoke in such a general conversation, unless she was right to the point,

and very often they wondered they had not thought of her bright suggestions themselves.

"It is only this: I have for some time been in the habit of watching customers, and making sure they have all their purchases just as they go away. Thus you see, John, I save having to 'chase after them.'"

At this there was a little laugh, and friend M. rejoined, "There we have it, just what I was trying to say. Your mother, John, has the true spirit of the text, after all. In serving her customers well, she anticipates not only their needs, but their probable weaknesses; and, come to think of it, they are not so much to be blamed after all. Your customers are all friends, and often stop to talk a bit and look at things; and as it is the most natural thing in the world to set things down, no wonder they forget." By this time he had felt in his last pocket, and found what he was after. It was a queen-cage, and he wanted a hundred made just like it.

"And I will tell you, friends, I think we had better make a thousand while we are about it, for, after the wood is got out, Aunt Lucinda can make the tinwork, put in the candy, and tack on the wire cloth; and if we can't sell them all around here, why, we will just advertise them in the —— let's see! what is Tom going to call our little paper when he gets it started?"

Aunt Lucinda most thankfully accepted the offer of something to do; and as she was a Sunday-school teacher in the little church, she and Mrs. Jones arranged the matter of pay without a bit of trouble, and in a very few weeks she could drive nails, and do small tinwork, with her nimble fingers, with a rapidity that not only left Mr. Merrybanks and Mr. Jones far behind, but even John found he was no match for the "schoolma'am." And she could drop her hammer and nails, and make pies too, that sold like hot cakes. As many as 25 pies in a day were frequently sold; and although the lit-

tle house seemed pretty small and crowded many times, there was such a kindly spirit of good will everywhere, that it really seemed as if other members of the little family besides Mr. Jones were saying to themselves,

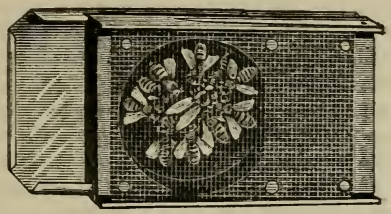
And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.—MATT. 20:28.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God.—MICAH 6:8.

THE bees all wintered nicely around Onionville, and many preparations are now being made for a fine crop of honey. Mr. Merrybanks and his neighbor are having all they can possibly do making bee-hives, even with the aid the sawmill men can give them. Aunt Lucinda has made nearly a whole basswood-tree up into queen-cages; but perhaps I ought to say the tree was not very large. It was cut down in the woods, and ripped up into plank about 2½ inches thick, and these were then ripped up into strips about three inches wide. To have them dry quickly, these strips of plank were put up on some timbers over the great boiler of the sawmill. After they were dry they were smoothed on two sides with the big power planer, and then with the boring-machine they were quickly bored—one large and two small holes. The large hole was 2 in., and the small ones ⅝, the smaller ones being so near the larger one as to make a ¼ opening from one to the other. You see, they were all along in the sticks, so that when a stick was completely bored it was all ready to be ripped lengthwise into long strips of queen-cages. These strips, when ripped off and planed, were just ½ in. thick. The

next thing to do to them was to saw a little groove for the tin to slide in, near each corner. This was done on a little platform fixed on the right bevel, close up to the saw. You can see the large hole referred to below; but the two small ones are covered with manilla paper to keep the candy from rattling out.



MERRYBANKS' QUEEN-CAGE.

After all the grooving was done, the sticks were taken in bundles, being careful to have the holes all match (the holes were all at an equal distance apart, because they were accurately spaced by the boring-machine), and cut up so as to make the cages complete, except the tin, candy, and wire cloth. Mr. Merrybanks said they would offer these bored wooden blocks to the people at a low price just as they were, for the women and children could make the rest at their own homes, and thus save expense. John thought they couldn't all make the tin slide, for they didn't all have a tinner's shears and fifty-cent folder, so they decided to offer the tin slides and the woodwork both for sale. The price they fixed on them by the hundred was a cent and a half for the wood part, and half a cent each for the tin slides. The cheapest kind of tin is, of course, as good for the slides as any. It is first cut into quare pieces. To be sure and have these right, a nice tin pattern is kept hung up on a nail, and plainly labeled, so that no mistakes will be made. They should be so folded as to

slide closely, or a queen may be lost by an unlucky slide dropping out, and, at the same time, they should not push it in too hard, or it may be so much trouble in withdrawing the slide after the cage is affixed to the comb that it is pulled loose, endangering the queen in that way. The shrinking of the wood will, of course, be liable to make trouble of this kind, and, to guard against it, the pieces were piled out in the sun, and turned over until they were most thoroughly seasoned before the tins were fitted. If at any time a tin was found too loose, they found by bending down the fold that it could be made to work as closely as desired. The wire cloth was cut with a pattern in the same way, and, to avoid the nuisance of loose ends of wire to catch, the edges of this were also folded. After the women got to work at them, Mr. M. gave them a good many hints in regard to saving time and material. First, they cut the wire cloth larger than was needed. He explained that all that was needed was just enough to barely cover the holes in the wood. Any more would be a waste of time, wire cloth, and postage. The same with the tin slides. The candy, which was the kind given us by friend Good, was put into the two smaller holes, before the wire cloth was put on.

At first they greased the tin slides where the candy touched, but friend M. explained that it was not necessary, for, when cold, the tin is easily broken loose; and besides, a very small particle of oil or grease is fatal to bees or other insects, by closing their breathing-pores. The tin points for holding the cages to the combs, they had been in the habit of making one at a time and snipping a corner off from each, to be thrown away. He showed them a better way, by cutting strips $\frac{7}{8}\times 3\frac{1}{4}$. The hole for driving in the tack was now punched in each end, and then a sloping cut across near the middle made two points at once, nicely sharpened. One cut not only made two, but, by punching the holes while together, there were only half as many pieces to be handled. Where one makes only a few

cages, it would seem that five cents is a pretty small price; but after making a thousand or more, one becomes astonished to see how cheaply such a thing can be made, especially where all false and useless motions in their manufacture are thrown out.

There were two diversions from the business of bee culture going on about this time. One was Mr. Merrybanks' new speculation of raising fish. He had got some new German carp, and they were in a pond by themselves, where he tamed them so that they would come up and eat out of his hand, like a lot of pigs or chickens; and so eager were they for their daiiy rations, they would often jump clear up out of the water to show their joy at the prospect of being fed. He claimed that he could raise fish so cheaply he was going to supply the lunch-room with fish that could be sold at 5 cents a dish, just as they sold corn and baked beans, and so, of course, all the hands at both the saw and grist mill were interested in the experiment. The other diversion was John's ducks, and this is

THE DUCK STORY.

You see, Mr. Jones didn't keep any fowls, and I don't exactly know why he didn't, either; for boiled eggs had got to be a very favorite lunch, served with horseradish. Did I tell you that Mr. Merrybanks had invented a machine to grate horseradish with? Well, he did, and he put it up in those 3-cent honey-tumblers, and sold tumbler and all for only 5 cts. It is true, some of the mill-men would take a whole tumblerful at a meal, but it had a "big run," as John said, for all that, and would have had a bigger one still if they had not used up all the horseradish in the neighborhood. A horseradish plat is now started, and another year they are going to have some of the cultivated sort. Its straight, regular rows, and luxuriant foliage, are now a pleasant sight.

This isn't a duck story, is it? Well, you just wait and see. You see, John had to go to the grocery for eggs a great many times, and a project had been talked of for raising their own eggs. One morning, as he was taking a basket of eggs home, Tom, Bob, and several others, met him, when Tom exclaimed,—

"Why, John, where did you get those duck's eggs?"

"They aren't duck's eggs, they are hen's eggs that I just bought at the grocery."

"I tell you they are duck's eggs; aren't they, Bob?"

"Duck's eggs, as sure as I am alive," said Bob, with the air of a professor, for he was the "poultry-man" of the town, and prided himself not a little as such.

"Haven't you got a hen that sits?" inquired Tom.

"We haven't any hens at all," said John, and then he resumed: "Why, what about hens that sit, any way?"

"Why, you could just put those eggs under a hen, and she would hatch you out a whole brood of ducks, and they would just do splendidly on that pond of yours."

"But," said John, beginning to catch the fever a little, "ducks don't lay as many eggs as hens do, do they?"

"You bet they do," said another boy who had just come up. "We used to have ducks, and they just laid, and laid, and never stopped to sit, as hens do."

Now, thought John, I know ducks are just what we want; and if I could only get a sitting hen, wouldn't it be fun to raise them? Here Bob interposed a suggestion:

"I've got a sitting hen, a good one, that I will rent to you for 5 cents a week."

"Done," said John; "and here is the money for four weeks. Let us go right over and get her."

"John marched home triumphantly with the basket of duck's eggs in one hand and sitting hen in the other. But when his mother explained to him that he could buy hens right out for less money than he had paid for the use of one

a month, he was a good deal set back. At her suggestion he carried the hen back again and remonstrated against this piece of juvenile extortion. Bob refused to give back the money, and only replied to all John's explanations, that "A bargain's a bargain," and the rest of the boys only laughed and bantered him until the duck story seemed to bid fair to be the bane of his life. John refused to take the poor hen, and Bob refused to take her, and she seemed likely to have liberty to sit or not sit, as she chose, until friend M. happened along, and they stated the case to him. When he found, by reasoning with Bob, that he had no mind to relent in the least, he advised John to stand by the original bargain. Said he,—

"Boys, you have here a fair illustration of business matters among grown-up men. As a general rule, with but few exceptions, I would advise you always to stand to all agreements. If you have made a promise hastily, get an honorable release from it if you can; but if you can not, hold to it to the very letter, and resolve it shall be a lesson to you to be more careful in the future. John, take your hen home, and set her as you intended; and as it may be difficult to get her to sit amid new surroundings, I am sure Bob will lend you her old nest, and enough of the surroundings to make her feel at home. Will you not, Bob?"

"Of course," said Bob; "she was in a barrel, and we will take the barrel down and fix it up, and put her on; won't we, boys?"

They did so, and she is this minute sitting as nicely as can be, on thirteen eggs in the barrel, nicely fixed up, down near the pond. In just four weeks we will take a look at the premises again, and see what has happened in all this time.

One day, as Mr. Jones was coming home from his work, with his horse and wagon, he saw, some little distance ahead

of him, a man on foot. Of course, he asked the man if he would not like a lift in his wagon; and after he got in, and they had talked of the weather and different subjects, Mr. Jones began meditating whether it were best to speak to him, an utter stranger, on the subject of his soul's salvation. He knew his neighbor Merrybanks would, but he talked so easily it seemed perfectly right and natural for him to do so. The more he thought of it, the more it seemed as if he could never do it; why, the man would surely think him crazy to start out, on so short an acquaintance, and such an unusual subject. A better spirit, however, urged him to ask God to guide, and make the attempt, at least. The man did seem astonished at first; but when he understood that it was out of a kind and friendly heart that the words came, and to him an utter stranger, he was visibly touched, and in his turn gave Mr. Jones a history of his life. He had indeed been a bad and wicked man, and it was many years since any one had thought of speaking of the Savior to one so far away as he. Before they reached home, he told Mr. Jones if there was any thing in the world he could do for him, he would do it. "I will work for my board, or you may give any wages you think proper, only let me be near you, and do not force me to go away from the only person on the face of the earth who has seemed like a friend to me." He stayed, and proved a most efficient hand in helping about the bees, bee-hives, carp-pond, garden, or any thing else; for there is no work in the world that counts like that glad and willing service that comes from a grateful heart. Furthermore, he had once worked in a glass-factory, but had been discharged because of intemperance. Well, he had several times suggested that they could sell with their tinware small fancy glassware, such as he used to make; and after he had been there long enough to convince his friends that he really meant to lead the life of a Christian, they sent him one day with the horse and wagon to the city

where he used to work, for a load of glassware. Here are a few pieces of what he brought back.

THE GLASSWARE THAT "JIM" BROUGHT BACK.

They were made for a little set, sugar, cream, butter, and spoon holder, but they took the butter for comb honey, the cream for liquid honey, the sugar for candied honey, and the spoon-holder for honey-flowers, and thus made them all into honey-dishes; and at ten cents apiece the whole wagon-load was disposed of in a very short time, and "Jim" was soon to go for more. And that very little venture of friend Jones in Christian work bid fair to not only save a soul, but God sent a speedy blessing with it in the shape of this glassware trade.

CHAPTER XXXII.

So the Lord alone did lead him, * * * * and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock.—DEUT. 32:12, 13.

THE duck-eggs have hatched, and the little ones are old enough to find their way down to the water, not very far from the old barrel from which they first looked out upon the light of day; and every morning, as soon as the sun is up, and they have had their breakfast of meal and water, which they take up with their comical spoon-shaped bills, down they go to the glassy surface of the pond, and amuse themselves. The children have laughed to see their antics and capers, until it has got to be the principal feature of interest at the Temperance Hotel, to see the ducks play. Would you like to see them? Well, here they are.

There are eleven of them; and when they all take a notion to dive, the children consider this the crowning feature of the entertainment; and when one after another pops his head up into the air again, with such a sort of comical twinkle in his bright little eyes, John thinks there never was so pretty a lot of pets in all the world before, and he has already laid plans for the prettiest and handiest duck-house that ever was seen, to be built solely for his wabbling web-footed flock. He has borrowed Mr. Merrybanks' poultry-book, and hunted over the *Rural New-Yorker* and *American Agriculturist* in vain for a word about ducks; but for some strange reason, the world almost seems to ignore the subject so dear to his heart, and it is only now and then that a word is dropped in regard to them. "Do you know any thing about ducks?" has come to be the stereotyped inquiry that John puts to almost every one he knows, and often to people he doesn't know, or at least whom

THE DUCK-POND AND THE DUCKS.

he has known but a very little while. His mother is inclined to be a little anxious about him in the matter, and to fear he will neglect his tinwork, and get changeable-minded; but friend M. tells her to let him alone, and that it is a good thing for a child to get enthusiastic on any branch of rural industry, or any other, for that matter, that sends him to books and papers and people for knowledge. Very likely, friend M. has had some experience; and as he is pretty comfortably off in this world's goods, he certainly can not be very much mistaken. Already it has resulted in John's taking a half-acre of ground on shares, which he has planted to corn to feed his flock of ducks on through the winter; and, by the way, one great cause of anxiety to him has been to know what they were going to do through the winter when the pond freezes up. Mary suggested that that they would probably "slide" in-

stead of swim; but a glance at their soft pink feet only makes John resolve anew that they shall have a warm house in a dry sandy place; and as he has studied up pretty well the subject of poultry-houses, and the profit to be derived from saving the manure, he declares their house shall have its floor dusted with dry ashes every single morning, so that it shall be pleasant and clean, as well as warm, all the winter long.

"Mother, don't you think their feet can be made to always stay soft and pink, just as they are now, if they have a real nice clean house?"

"Very likely they would, if you teach them to wash their feet every night, just before they go to bed, as you do;" but it is Mary, instead of his mother, who says this, and there is a sly twinkle in her eye, as she puts on the concluding part of the sentence, with emphasis, for John well remembers that his mother often has to scold some to get him to wash his feet every Saturday night, to say nothing of every night.

While she is speaking, she has gradually edged round near to the open door, judging rightly that John will be likely to give her a chase in return for this gratuitous piece of information; nor was she disappointed. He makes a spring, intending to catch her before she gets out; but she slips past him like the wind, and, before her mother can say a word to her about her unfinished work, both go flying across the garden and around the pond. Mary got around on the opposite side, and then managed to keep John directly opposite her, by going first one way and then the other, as often as he started to go in either direction. It was no use; she was the quicker, and he couldn't catch her. Finally, as if to divert attention, she called out,—

"Why, John, there were eleven ducks this morning: now I can count only ten." They both counted, and they had to sadly acknowledge there were but ten, and the missing duck was one with a queer white spot on its back.

"Let's call them up and feed them."

"Ducky! ducky! ducky!"

Up scrambled the ten, but nowhere could the eleventh be found. John feared it had got drowned; but neighbor M. assured him ducks do not drown: besides, if it had it would float. The next morning another was gone. Weasles, minks, skunks, suggested sympathizing friends. The nine were put into the barrel with their hen-mother that night, and the entrance closed with a slatted door. In the morning, out marched the nine, as big as life; but on counting them again toward noon, only eight were found. Who could solve the mystery? Why should the animal, or whatever it was, take only one a day? They usually disappeared in the morning, but not always; and the great mystery remained unsolved, until only two were left. John was now watching the ducks nearly half his time, and finally he saw, one morning, the great black cat stealthily stealing along in the grass near the margin of the pond. He ran hastily and shouted at him, but Dick in a twinkling grabbed one of the two remaining ducks in his mouth, and was off like an arrow. John grabbed a half-brick and gave chase. Into the cellar went Dick with his duck, and into the cellar went John with his brick uplifted. Dick esconced himself up in the further corner, under one of the joists, and glared at John in the darkness, with eyes like a couple of coals of fire, while he still held the duck in his mouth. Dick had probably never heard of "roast duck;" but if he had, I presume he would have said he preferred his when of just the right tender age, without roasting. If he did not know by experience that ducks are good to eat, who did? John did not stop to moralize, however. He was a practiced ball-player, and his temper was up; in fact, it had been getting up for a week, and many a time he had vowed vengeance on the unscrupulous author of his sore trials. Whack! went the brick, and John's mother, in the room

above, heard an unearthly screech in the cellar; John picked up his dead duck, and went up and sat down on the doorstep and—cried. Yes, he *did* cry; in fact, he sobbed so that when friend Merybanks came up and asked what it all meant, John could only point with his finger at the poor little soft downy duck, as he lay on the step beside him, still and silent in death. His pranks and antics in the water were all over. Not all the skill of man could make those little pink webbed feet move again, nor those queer little eyes open once more; no, not even for one instant.

John's father was inclined to remonstrate at so much fuss just about a dead duck; but friend M. kindly took John's part. Said he: "I like to see boys who care for things, and it is far better, friend Jones, to have them carry it to extremes, even, than to see a boy who cares for nothing. Let him cry, and it will make him the better man for it. I am not sure but that it would be better for us if we all cried more and harder. 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.' John!"

"Sir?" John had got over the tumult enough now, so he could answer.

"How long ago was it that you rented that hen?"

"About seven weeks."

"Have they been pleasant weeks, John?"

"Very pleasant, sir, until the ducks began to get lost." Here John heaved a sigh again, and wiped his eyes.

"Your experiment cost you twenty cents, and what have you got left?"

"One duck," said John, sadly and sorrowfully.

"But, John, it seems to me you have got more than that 'one duck' for the twenty cents. How about that half-acre of corn?"

"Why, I shan't need all that for just one duck; and besides I worked and got that."

"I guess we shall find other use for the corn besides feeding it to ducks, John; and you say you worked for it. Now tell me if you think it likely you would have worked as you did at it, early and late, had it not been for the enthusiasm that your pets (or the prospect of them) stirred within you."

"I am quite sure I should not have have had the corn if it had not been for the ducks."

"Well, in looking over the agricultural papers to find something about ducks, you became interested in the subject of fertilizers?"

"Yes," said Mary, who had been looking out of the door for some time unobserved, "that's what made him buy that bagful of stuff that made it smell so nasty around here we could hardly sleep nights; but it made his corn grow, I guess; and I tell you, Mr. Merrybanks, have you seen our summer squashes, around which he put some of the stuff?"

"No: tell us about them, Mary."

"Why, he dug the dirt away from them until they almost fell over, and then he sifted the stuff carefully around where the little roots were; then he put a lot more of nice fine dirt around them, and mixed it all up so the fertilizer would not be too strong for them, and you just come and look at them now."

The squashes were indeed pictures of the most beautiful, healthy luxuriance, and his experiments had gone to other garden vegetables as well, and John, in his delight in explaining and showing them, had already almost forgotten his sorrow. To tell the truth, he had, since the ducks began to disappear, almost neglected to look at his garden, and, come to take a good look at the things, he was almost as much surprised as the rest of them.

"John," said friend M., after they were seated again, "has it occurred to you that you have, during the past few weeks, got a great deal of general knowledge of a valuable kind for a boy? You have not only studied up corn and fertilizers, but

you have studied up the modern machinery for applying these new and useful manures, in a way that is beginning to give you a glimpse of the great busy world engaged in furnishing farmers with improved tools and materials for their work. Do you not see God's hand in this?"

"But my ducks are gone."

"Yes; but are you sure there is not a kind Providence in their being gone? They have served as stepping-stones, as it were, to things of more importance; and now you are once started, you are going to keep on reading your papers, give your garden all the more attention, and thank God still, are you not?"

"I will try."

Mr. M. did not remind him that such a lot of ducks grown up would have spoiled the pond and injured the fish, because he did not think it well just then; but it was, nevertheless, true. The remaining duck was turned over to Mary, and she playfully termed him her "orphling." By some strange freak, we hardly know how, he was nicknamed "Moses," and Moses was soon a great pet with all.

Dick, the cat (he didn't die), was soon taught that ducks are not to eat; but he had a sort of way of plaguing the duck by trying to play with him, or worrying him when he was taking his food out of his own especial basin, and then his little mistress Mary would come and scold Dick, and drive him off. Well, strange to tell, Moses soon learned to run for Mary every time the cat bothered him, and his manner, as he wagged his short tail and quacked his complaint, seemed really as if he was telling of the indignities he received, in plain words, and nothing would pacify him until she would go out and give Dick a real hard scolding, and tell him to leave Moses alone. "He is aunty's poor little 'orphling,' and they shan't chase and bother him; she just won't have it;" and then as he waddled off to the cat (looking back now and then

to assure himself if she was close behind), one would think, by his manner, he repeated it all with a "now you chase me any more, if you *dare!*"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love: in honor preferring one another.—ROMANS 12:10.

"MOTHER, make John stop opening the door and letting the flies in. He has just been opening and shutting it for pretty nearly half an hour, and the flies have just come in by the thousands."

"Mother, it isn't any such thing. I don't believe I've been here five minutes, and there hasn't been over a dozen flies got in, if you count them."

"Well, you know what trouble mother and I have to get them out, and how hard we have tried to keep them out. Mother! can't he stop? I wish you would just go along out of doors, and go to work."

"Well, now, what is the use of being so fidgetty about a few flies? They don't do any hurt. Can't a body ever sit down to rest just a minute, without such an everlasting fault-finding?"

I wonder, my friends, if you ever have any such talk at your house. I do not mean to say there was any thing *very* bad about it, for this brother and sister loved each other, and either one would have been sad and lonesome had the other been even for one day absent. They were not only brother and sister by flesh-and-blood ties, but they were brother and sister in the little church I have given you glimpses of now and then. It was bad in one respect; for such expressions, even in a mood of pleasantry, are not just the best thing. It

wasn't quite pleasantry either, for this matter of letting flies in was a sore point, and Mary and her mother had many times begged the "men folks" to please be careful. Do you remember the telephone I told you of last spring? Well, it was there yet, and it had more than once, when they least expected it, faithfully reported what was going on. When neighbor M. came over in the evening, he repeated the little text at the head of our chapter, and sat down by the young folks to have a little talk with them. He was the superintendent of their little Sunday-school, and of course they took it kindly of him.

"Mr. M.," said Mary, "I was right, was I not, in not wanting the flies to come into the house, and get on the goods we keep to sell?"

"You were doubtless right, my girl, in wanting to keep the tin and glass ware, and other goods, free from the disagreeable marks left by flies; but, are you sure you were taking the easiest and shortest way to get John to aid you in the matter?"

Mary saw the point well enough; but partly out of perversity, and partly out of fun, she replied, "Why, he always minds mother: isn't that the best way to make him stop?"

"We might lay the question before your mother, as to whether she would like her boy and girl to agree between themselves, or to call on her to make one or the other do so and so, when they seem obstinate; or we might settle it without calling her at all. I am sure my girl is honest and true, and I know, too, that she is wise, and judges well, when she has a mind to." At this point, friend M. had taken Mary by the hand, and was looking kindly into her eyes. "Mary, do you think your mother likes to be called upon to make John mind?"

"No, I know she does not; for I have often heard her say so when she was tired."

"Your good kind mother has many cares and worries: would it not be a kindness, to avoid teasing and asking her

questions of this nature as much as possible?" Friend M. here reached over and took a cased picture from off the stand. "Your mother was once a bright young girl, children; as you look at this picture of her in her younger years, you can readily note how fast she is growing old. Did you never think that it is these little cares and worries that add the wrinkles, and that even such trifling talks as you had this morning may go a great way toward wearing down that cheerful, hard-working mother? It is a work of love, I know: for she is the best and most faithful friend you have ever known, or may ever know. Is it not worth while for us all to try to keep her young-looking, and to make her glad by showing that we appreciate that kind, self-sacrificing spirit, and mean to show it by actions as well as words?" The tears came into the eyes of both the children as they looked on the picture. John was the first to ask forgiveness; but Mary declared it was all her fault. Friend M. began feeling in all his pockets for a handkerchief: but as usual it was in the last one of them all; and before he got it the tears came into his eyes too, and all he could say, was. "God bless the children!"

Presently he brightened up, and began again.

"Look here, Mary; unless I am very much mistaken, John had some reason for swinging that door, even five minutes. It is some reason that we, in our want of charity, never once dreamed of: for John is no idler, and seldom does things without a purpose. Out with it, John."

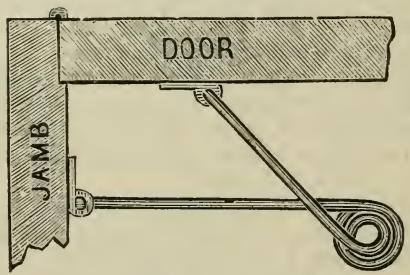
John glanced at the screen-door, and finally came out with "Why, you see the spring of father's smoker is broken, and I was just thinking that it we had a spring that could be easily slipped on the outside, a new one might be put on without ripping the leather off and gluing it on again; and while I was thinking about it, I happened to open the door to go out, and then I sat down to think about it, and was opening the door

and letting it shut, to see if I thought the spring was too stiff; and while I was thinking, I kept opening and shutting it."

"Well done, my boy!" And as friend M. spoke, he, too, began opening and closing the door; but as it was after dark, no flies came in then. "Why, John, you have made a great invention. Bring me the smoker with the broken spring."

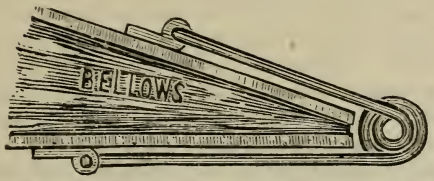
"Why, Tom has got a smoker with the spring broken too," said Mary, "and the other day he wanted to sell the queen of one of his cross colonies to a man, and the only way they could make the smoker go was to blow in the door, and he blowed until he got ever so dizzy, and the hybrid bees got after him and stung him *awfully*. His face didn't swell up as it did when he carried the bees home, though, for he has got used to it; but I know he would be real glad if you could fix his smoker."

Without so much as asking leave, friend M. took the spring off the door, and with a little sewing-machine screw-driver he soon had it attached to the crippled smoker. This is the way the spring was when on the door,



THE SPRING TO THE SCREEN-DOOR.

and this is the way it was when he had got it fastened on to the smoker.



THE WAY THE SPRING LOOKED AFTER IT WAS PUT ON THE SMOKER.

The last one of the four screws was set down in place, and the bellows was pressed together to see if the spring would raise the boards. It was just the thing exactly. The boards would go clear down so as to strike together, and yet up they rose, as quick as a wink, straightening the leather out, even better than the steel spring ever did.

"And it works so nicely and easily," said John; "and, Mr. M., can we not slip the spring out when the smoker is to be sent off or laid away?"

In a twinkling the wire was bent a little, so it could be slipped out or put back securely in place in a little more than a second of time; and by this time John was on his feet, dancing after the old fashion; but you see it didn't make the dishes clatter, for this house was founded on a rock.

"Why, we can sell thousands and thousands of them," said John, "for they can be put on any kind of a smoker; and if one ever breaks, a new one can be put in just so quick," suiting the action to the word, as he took the spring out and put it back again, over and over.

"O Mr. M.! let us take it right over to the doctor's and get Tom to see if he can't engrave it and put it in his paper. Father and mother are over there, and, oh! won't they be pleased?"

Onionville, as you know, is not a very large place; and

when any thing happens. it is generally pretty well known in a very short time; and so by the time they got to the grocery, by some unexplained process that goes far ahead of telephones or daily papers, quite a little crowd came out to see the improvement John had made in smokers. Of course, everybody was delighted with it; and as the doctor lived close by, they all had to follow over. Tom had gone to the city, and was expected home every minute; but every new comer must see that smoker-spring put on and taken off, and John had by this time had practice enough so he could do it almost as deftly as a sleight-of-hand performer. Our friend Bob was among the lookers-on; and as he had been at work that day, fixing up and fencing off a swampy piece of ground for his gold-spangled Polands (you know they are great ramblers, and want large yards), he came in barefooted. As he crowded up to see the sight, a man with a long clay pipe set his heavy cowhide boot on Bob's bare foot, and Bob swore.

"Sh—sh!" said some one near; and he punched him with his thumb, and pointed to friend Merrybanks. Our friend M. was so well known in the community, and also the fact that he had so often reproved swearing, that the sight of his turned back was a terror to evil-doers. Bob would usually have been hushed with this, but now he was angry. He was the more angry, because the man with the pipe seemed so intent on seeing what was to be seen, that he cared little whom he had hurt. How often a little apology will mend a matter, if made quickly and with a kind spirit! Had he only said, "I am very sorry indeed, my boy, I was so careless and awkward," Bob would have overlooked it in an instant; but as it was, he argued the point, and declared Mr. Merrybanks wasn't any better than some folks who did swear. It was a rather trying place for friend M.; and while he was waiting for God to direct in what way he should act, Tom drove up. The first words he heard were,—

"I tell you, they aren't a bit better. Tom swears, and the doctor swears, and they are just as good as any of your church people."

"Why, Bob, what is the fuss to-night? What was it I heard you say about me?"

Bob explained matters; but as he did so he was evidently softening down some.

"Look here, Bob, with shame I acknowledge that I do swear; but with God's help I will swear no more. I have been thinking of this a long time, and now I will tell you what more we will do. Next Sunday I am going to Sabbath-school, if friend Merrybanks has some back corner where I may sit and learn decency. If I heard aright as I drove up, you were quoting me a little; now, come and go with me, and then there will be a pair of us who are going to do better."

Friend M., you see, had not even so much as said a word, and yet here was a good work going on before him. That wasn't all, either. The doctor came up and took him by the hand, and wanted to be counted, too, among those who were determined to try to do better. It is to be regretted that he could not speak out in as manly a way as his boy did; but he felt the reproof administered by poor Bob in his anger, and resolved that he would try that the boys should no more quote his example as an excuse for swearing. My friend, what do you think about it? Is there one whose eye rests on this little story who is in the habit of swearing when he gets mad? If there is, and you are thinking this minute that you will be no longer quoted as were Tom and the doctor, just come out before men, or before these boys and girls, rather, and say, as did Tom, God helping, no more shall an oath pass my lips. I do not believe it will be best to offer a smoker in this case, but I do believe that we can help each other by letting our names come out before the world, as our friends have done in the Tobacco Column, in GLEANINGS. We each and all, no

matter what we believe in our own hearts, know it is bad and wrong to take the name, either in anger or sport, of Him who created and reigns over this vast universe. Is it not so?

One of the boys took Tom's horse; and as he got out, they noticed he had a long bundle in his hand. It looked about like this:—

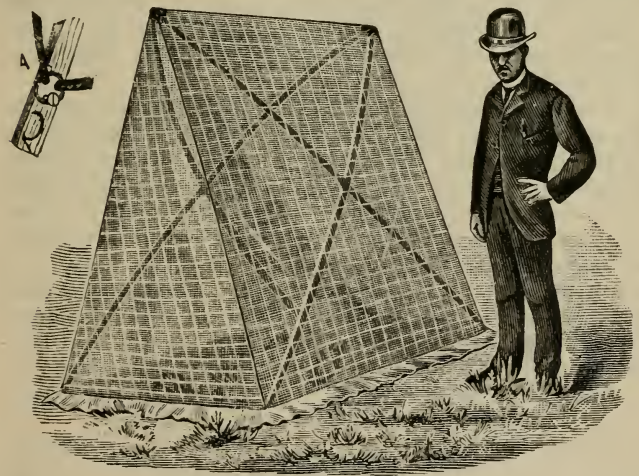
TOM'S BUNDLE.

"Well, friends, John has shown you his smoker, and now I have got something to show you. Mother, will you please bring the lamp? There, Mary can hold it."

I don't know but I ought not to tell of it; but just then it occurred to Mary what a handsome fellow Tom the doctor's boy was, dressed up just as he had come from the city, as he singled her out to hold the lamp, which he handed her with a sort of good-natured look. She remembered what he had said about going to Sunday-school; and a prayer involuntarily rose in her heart, that God might keep him there. In a twinkling the straps that held the bundle were removed; and as the covering dropped off, there appeared four light sticks, enveloped in folds of pink mosquito-bar. With a dexterity that compared well with that shown by John in putting in his smoker-spring, Tom spread the sticks, and a graceful little tent for putting over a bee-hive was displayed to their view, as seen on next page.

It is made by taking four basswood sticks, about 8½ feet long, and fastening them together like letter X's, with a good strong screw where they cross. A piece of good strong tarred twine, or small rope, makes the ridge-pole, as seen in the engraving, and this same twine unites the sticks at their tops. The mosquito-bar is sewed into a sort of bag, having the same strong twine all around its lower edges, and down each of

the four corners. At these corners are also sewed metal rings, and these rings, when pulled down strongly, will loop over screw-heads, near the lower ends of the four sticks. When thus looped over, the sticks are bent or bowed, so as to give room in the top of the tent. The whole structure weighed less than five pounds, and yet it gave room inside for a hive, and to do all necessary work. Every one who lifted it burst forth in exclamations of surprise. The basswood sticks are $1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{4}$ at the lower end, and tapered to $1 \times \frac{3}{4}$ at their upper end, with the corners taken off, to make them as light as possible. Where the bend comes they are scraped a little thinner.



THE NEW FOLDING BEE-HIVE TENT.

"Why, Tom, where in the world did you get this? who invented it?" came from all.

"Well," said Tom, "I will tell you. On my way home, I came around by the 'Home of the Honey-Bees,' and this tent

was one that Ernest and John have just invented. I bought it for an even $1.25; and when that hive of hybrids gets cross again, I will just clap the tent over them, and see if they will sting anybody."

"But," said Tom's father, "what is to prevent the wind from blowing it away? It is so light, the least breeze would be likely to move it."

"Oh! but see here," said Tom. "You did not notice these anchors." And, stooping down, he took hold of a bent wire nail (shown at one corner of the cut), and turned it so it could be pushed into the ground. The opposite corner-post, or leg, was spread out a little, and pushed in also, and it then "held its ground" very firmly. When not in use, these nails turned so as to have their points up against the side, entirely out of the way.

"And," continued Tom, "they say it is just the thing to put over a colony when it is being robbed. You clap the thing right over the hive, anchor it down, and when the robber-bees come out of their hives they will cluster in the peak of the tent. After a little you lift the tent up, tip it upside down, let the robbers out, and clap it right over the hive again, and keep on until all the robbers are out of the hive. But Ernest and John say there is a better way. Make a hole right in the peak of the tent, and all the robber-bees will bump their heads around until they get to the peak of the tent, and, finding the hole, they will escape, and not a bee will smother."

"But," said Mary, "won't these robbers go right down into the hole again?"

"Oh, no!" said Tom; "they say, at the Home of the Honey-Bees, a bee hasn't got sense enough to go back down through the hole from which he has just escaped. He will bump around the outside of the tent, and finally go off in disgust."

"That would be a capital thing," said Tom's father, "to get the bees out of the sections. Why, all you would have to

do would be to shake as many of the bees out of the crate of sections as possible, and place them under this tent. The few remaining bees would soon leave the sections, fly to the top of the tent, and escape through that hole, but not a robber-bee could gain access to the sections. Boys," he continued, "you can call that my invention."

"But look here," said Tom; "they tell me, at the Home of the Honey-Bees, that they *had* used it for this very purpose, and that it had worked just exactly as you said it would."

"Well now," said Tom's father, "I thought I was prior to any one else in getting bees out of the sections by the use of the tent."

"You say John and Ernest invented the tent," said Mary. "We have read about Ernest, but who is John?"

"Why, John is the young man who has charge of the apiary. He has a brother Albert, and they call them 'the young Canadians;' and I tell you, but you just ought to hear the two boys sing. Here is one of the songs that I wrote off, and perhaps some of us will learn to sing it one of these days." Unlike friend Merrybanks, Tom picked it out of the right pocket the first time trying, and this is what he read:—

SOME FOLKS.

Some folks drink their wine—
Some folks do, some folks do;
And think it very fine—
But that's not me nor you.

CHORUS AFTER EACH VERSE.

Three cheers for water, water pure from every rill that flows,
And three times three for the boys in the temperance cause.

Some folks take a "smile"—
Some folks do, some folks do;
And thus the time beguile—
But that's not me nor you.

Some folks often try—
Some folks do, some folks do,
To "sample" on the sly—
But that's not me nor you.

Some folks get home late—
Some folks do, some folks do;
And don't walk very straight—
But that's not me nor you.

Some folks lose their cash—
Some folks do, some folks do,
Investing in such trash—
But that's not me nor you.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The hand of the diligent shall bear rule; but the slothful shall be under tribute.—PROV. 12:24.

"TEN cents a dozen?"

"Yes, sir, that is the price," said John, as he handed them to the man, and the ears were so large that he had a pretty good armful. You see, it was the product of that cornfield; for under the influence of the clean culture John had given it, and stimulated by the phosphate, he had a most beautiful piece of corn, and he had grown to love it almost as much as he did the ducks. Not a weed was to be seen in it; and with the aid of the horse, the ground had been kept so mellow that John could kick up the soft dirt with his bare feet even now, in any part of the field. How it did grow! Almost the first thing in the morning he looked at was the bright, clean, green leaves, and he often wandered among its rustling foliage just the last thing before he went to bed at night. In fact, this cornfield came very near verifying the saying, that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever;" for if John was ever tempted to be discouraged, or to get "blue," he could always turn with comfort to the sight of that growing field. Now that the ears were just right for roasting, their enormous size made them eagerly taken by the villagers, and

John kept a neat basketful in a conspicuous place, where passers-by could see it, labeled, "Only 10 cents; basket and all. 15." Tom printed it in plain figures on some cheap cards; and as often as one card got soiled, a new one was put on to the handle of the basket, so it always looked nice, clean, and tempting. The baskets cost 50 cents a dozen in the city, so he made a small profit on them, and they sold often enough so he had always a bright clean one in sight. The Jones family had pretty well learned that the best way to make things tempting they wished to sell was to have them always looking fresh and clean. Who wouldn't have a cornfield?

At the last cultivating, John scattered turnip-seeds in the soft earth one day, just before a shower, and now the bright green leaves of the turnips were getting to be another theme of interest to him, and the temptation was so great to stir the soft earth around them that they got pretty well hoed, even if they were sown broadcast, for they some way seemed to like to be hoed, about as well as the old horse liked to be brushed and curried. How many of these boys and girls to whom I am talking have a garden? Is it nice and clean, and do not your flowers *like* to be hoed?

Well, it was not the corn alone that was thriving, but the bees all about Onionville had been giving an unexpected crop of honey this year, during the month of August. The hives were full, the bees were full and good-natured, and easy to handle, and I am not sure but that it had some effect in making their owners easy to handle too. Mr. Merrybanks has got on a new hobby, of selling honey to the people around home, instead of sending it off to the cities, and he has been watching the market, and watching customers. He not only watches customers while they are making purchases, but he watches them as they go home; and it is reported he has made some excuse to follow them home, just to see what they did with the honey, and how they managed it. I don't suppose he

made himself intrusive at all, for Mr. Merrybanks is a general favorite all around Onionville; and although people do smile a little at the mention of his name, they usually smile more when they see his shining face, especially when it beams with the reflection of some new idea he has just got into his head. Well, he has an idea in his head now; and as he has been following others around considerably, suppose we follow him a little. Although it is only half-past five in the morning, he is hastening over to his neighbor Jones, and, as he expected, finds the family all up, dressed, and faces washed. John is admiring his cornfield as usual; his father is taking care of the horse, and Mary and her mother are getting breakfast. They soon gather around him, and he commences.

"Friends, we must do something to make our packages honey-tight. Since we have got those nice new colored labels, the mischief is worse than it was before, for everybody who picks up a pail of honey tips it up the very first thing, to get a better look at the label, and then it oozes around the cover, and drizzles down over their clothing or on the floor, daubing and making a muss that is more trouble to clean up than the honey is worth. Very often the pail of honey is set in the buggy to be carried home; and in this hot weather the motion throws it over on all sides; and when it is to be taken out, the buggy and pail are all daubed, and it is a regular nuisance, I tell you. I heard a woman tell her husband the other day, she wished he would never bring another drop of honey on the premises. It was just on account of this daubing."

Here friend M. began hunting in his pockets as usual. Finally he produced a sample of the ordinary tops and bottoms for a quart fruit-can.

"Why," said John, at this juncture, "we can make pails of them just as easily, or easier, than the way we now make them; and by cementing the cap on, we have got it sure." and he got up from the doorstep in a hurry.

"Hold on, John," said his father; "let us see what they cost first."

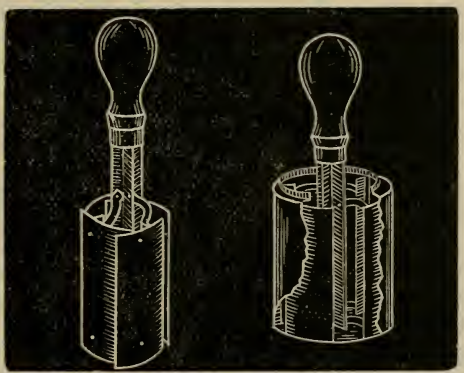
"Just $1.75 per gross, in ten-gross lots," said friend M., and then he took from his coat-sleeve, where it had been concealed, a piece of tin rolled up so as to form the body, and, clapping on the top and bottom, the can was complete in every respect, all but the solder.

"But," said John's father, "the joints are not close enough to solder."

At this juncture Freddie came running up with a queer-looking machine in his hand, and gave it to his father, with the remark, "Mamma said she was pretty sure you would want that too."

"Well, I am very grateful to you and mamma for your thoughtfulness."

While they are passing it around, we will take a look at it too.



THE NEW MACHINE FOR SOLDERING TIN PAILS AND TIN CANS.

The machine is put into the opening of the can partly closed up, and it is so made that when it is pressed down it expands,

bringing the body closely against both top and bottom, and holding the seam so close that it can be soldered with the greatest ease, thus finishing the whole can at one single operation and one soldering.

"How large is that piece of tin?"

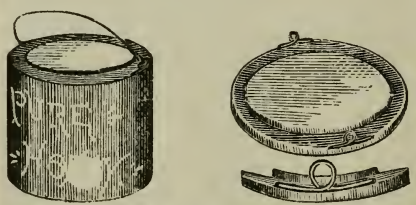
It was John's father who asked this, for he always, of late at least, had an eye for the main chances.

"It is exactly $3\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$, and we get five such pieces out of a 14 x 20 sheet of tin, and I can get them already cut and rolled, made of good bright tin, for $1.50 per hundred. Now, with these all prepared for honey-pails 'in the flat,' as they might be called, Aunt Lucinda would solder them up like 'smoke.'"

"How much does a pail hold like those you have there?" said John's father.

"It is D. A. Jones's 2½-lb. pail, such as was described in GLEANINGS IN BEE CULTURE, and they sell for 7 cents each, or $5.00 per hundred, with bails and all on."

Below we give you a picture of the new honey-pail and the pieces of which it is composed.



THE NEW HONEY-PAIL THAT WON'T LEAK OR DAUB WHEN TURNED OVER.

The ears, it will be observed, are made simply of a small bent wire; and, in fact, a common pin, bent with a pair of round-nosed pliers, makes a very good ear. The bail is made of rather small coppered-iron wire. Of course, smaller pails are made in the same way.

Before noon a lot of pails were finished, and in the after-

noon a call came through the telephone for all hands to come over and see how to put up honey. By the time our friends got there they saw quite a crowd around the greenhouse, eagerly watching the proceedings within. At first, Mrs. Jones wondered how it was that everybody was outside, which seemed so unlike the courtesy with which our friend usually invited all the neighbors in to see whatever was going on; but after stepping inside a moment, they were all, except John, glad to view proceedings from the outside too. It was because the air inside was like a brick oven. Although our friend had on the lightest clothing possible, he was sweating at such a rate that his large "bandana" was in almost constant requisition. The principal part of the greenhouse was occupied with two large shallow tin vats, having a honey-gate in one end which was slightly lower than the other. These were the ripening, or evaporating pans. In the center of the room, at the north side, was a queer arrangement of five-cent looking-glasses, turned at such an angle that the whole of them reflected the rays of the sun on a tin pan of wax, and the heat was so great as to keep it constantly melted. Into this pan of wax friend M. dipped loose cotton strings, and then hung them up to cool, something as we used to dip candles. After the strings were coated sufficiently, they were cut off the proper lengths, and laid in a bundle, on the little table near the gate to one of the large pans. Now, underneath this gate was a little machine that looked like a small center-table, but it was so arranged that it would whirl like a wheel, when touched by the finger. That it might run easily and steadily, the standard that held the top was pivoted with a steel point that rested on a piece of glass. Well, a cavity was turned in the wheel-like top, that one of the new honey-pails would just stand in while it was being filled from the gate over it. When full, the cap was pressed down, and one of the waxed strings coiled in the channel running around it. Of course, the length

of these waxed strings was just right to go clear around. Now the table was given a whirl, can and all, and then in a twinkling a large sun-glass was swung up, by means of an arm of wood to which it was attached, and the wax on the string settled down so as to make a most beautiful, glossy joint, and the pail was set away to give place to another. Honey-tumblers were filled and sealed in a similar way, only a strip of waxed paper was used instead of the string, and the burning-glass was made to throw the heat on the outside of the tin cap, just over the waxed paper. After friend Merrybanks had got quite a lot of tumblers and pails filled and sealed up, he placed them on a neat little stand, and carried out, for the outsiders to examine, the new sealed packages of honey. Here is the picture of his new honey-stand :—

STAND FOR RETAILING EXTRACTED HONEY.

"And is it really a fact," said the doctor, for he was here too, with the rest, "that these pails and jars can be tumbled and rolled about, and no honey will ooze out anywhere ?"

"Roll them about and see," said friend M.; and, suiting the action to the word, they were tossed down on the grass, and handed around among the lookers-on.

"But," resumed the doctor, "why do you work down there in that hot place? Is it just because the honey runs so much easier, and that you have it there to ripen?"

"That is not all, doctor."

Friend M. here took a tumbler of clear limpid basswood honey, and, holding it up to the light, opened his mouth to speak; but just at this juncture Freddie burst into the crowd with—

"O father! father! Just you have them all come and see how the bees are working on the *Symphoricarpus vulgaris*, *Monarda punctata*, and *Scrofularia nodosa*."

At this sally there was a big laugh all around, and the doctor suggested that Freddie had better come and live with him and learn to be a doctor, for he would no doubt succeed in mystifying folks, with long words, even if he didn't get any further.

"Well, you just come and look at the bees, and see how they work," persisted Freddie, not at all dismayed by their laughing.

"Come on, let's go and see the bees work on the posies with the wonderful long names, and we'll get the doctor to tell us what these names mean," said Jim, who had just driven up with a wagon-load of nice thin walnut lumber.

"All right," said the doctor; "I will do the best I can. But first we want friend Merrybanks to tell us why he seals up the honey in that hot room."

Mr. M. again held the tumbler of clear honey up against the sky so all could see it; but just at this moment the wind blew the stable-door open, displaying to old Dobbin the sight of his manger, which he wisely concluded contained oats, as it often did, and he made a vigorous push to go ahead. In doing so the wagon-wheel ran over the tip of the dog's tail, and his

quick yelp once more suddenly interrupted the words that were forthcoming. Jim caught the horse, however, and John patted the dog, and then our friend proceeded to explain that he expected any honey put up in that way to keep as clear and limpid, without any candying, even, all winter long, as the glassful he held in his hand. The doctor started.

"How hot is it in there?"

"About 150°, when all ventilation is cut off.

"And that heat, while it does not injure the honey in the least, will effectually keep it from candying, if it is sealed from the air while it is in there?"

"I think it will."

"It is precisely the same way the bees do it in their hives, to prevent capped comb honey from candying—evaporating it down thick, by the heat of the sun, and then sealing it up with beeswax, when it is just right."

"That is the idea."

"What are you going to do with that nice walnut lumber?"

"Make cases for honey, like the one you see here."

"And then?"

"Locate them, one in each country grocery, and perhaps some in the city, and then keep each stand supplied with clear liquid honey the year round."

"Why, there is a fortune in it."

Just here it was discovered that Mary was evidently wanting to say something to the doctor.

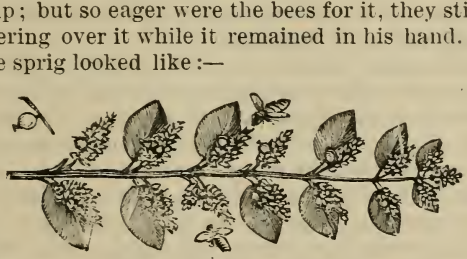
"Well, what is it, Mary?"

"Please, sir, you promised to tell us what those long hard names to the flowers mean."

"Well, Mary, I will do the best I can. Come, let us go and see—can you tell it all again, Freddie? Well, well! truly the bees are swarming on the plants. Now, Freddie, give us the name of the first one," said the doctor.

"*Symphoricarpus vulgaris.*"

You see, Freddie had tended the plants, and read about them, and it was no trouble for him to remember even the botanical names. In fact, I rather think he liked to say over those long crooked names, for you know there are some people and some boys and girls who have a natural love of words and language; and as it is our duty to cultivate these natural gifts, Freddie's father had rather encouraged this taste, even at some risk that his boy should become fond of showing off his learning. The doctor picked off a sprig of the plant, and held it up; but so eager were the bees for it, they still continued hovering over it while it remained in his hand. Here is what the sprig looked like:—



SYMPHORICARPUS VULGARIS.

"Well, let us see," said the doctor. "*Sym* means together, or crowded; *pherein* means to bear, or carry, and *karpos* means fruit; so the name means, we might say, 'bearing fruits crowded together.' Does it look any thing like that, children?"

"Yes," "Yes," came from all sides, for the berries and flowers were so crowded on the whole plant, they touched each other almost in one solid mass.

"Well," resumed the doctor, "did any of you ever see an old arithmetic, where it said in it, 'vulgar fractions,' where they nowadays say 'common fractions'?"

The children had not seen any such books, but many of the older ones had. "Well, *vulgar* really means common, or every-day, and the *vulgaris* means that it is the *common* plant

of this name, bearing fruits crowded together. You know the plant looks very much like the snowdrop of our gardens, only the berries are small and red (it is often called 'coral-berry'), instead of large and white; and the snowdrop is really a *Symphoricarpus* also."

"*Symphoricarpus racemosus*," volunteered Freddie, who had been deeply interested in the talk.

"Now for the next," said the doctor—"*Monarda punctata!* Why, this is really the celebrated horsemint that gave that man in Texas seven hundred pounds of honey from a single colony. Did you know that, Freddie?"

"Yes, sir, I guess I do; and you just ought to come down by the carp-pond and see the bed that me and pa"—(here his mother took hold of his ear and whispered, "Pa and *I*")—"have got. I tell you, but they are growing just splendid."

"Almost as nice as John's corn," suggested Jim.

Here the doctor, with a quick movement, pulled out his watch, and declared he could not stop a minute more, but would tell them about *monarda* next time. And I think, my little friends, I will have a picture of it when next time comes. So, good-by!

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE green corn was all gathered and the stalks cut up, and the white beans pulled and hung on stakes stuck into the ground until they were now dry, and ready to thrash out. The ears that ripened first were saved for seed, and these were now braided and hung up in the loft in the barn; for John had had some trouble in getting his corn to grow at the first planting, and friend M. had told him that

there was no way in the world so sure for corn saved for seed, as to hang it up by the husks. But, were not those ears whoppers? Why, the cob itself, after all the corn was shelled off, was about as large as an ordinary ear of corn. And were not those turnips handsome? Their bright green foliage was beautiful for the eye to look upon, were there nothing else; but as the autumn winds waved the leaves to one side a little, a bright purple bulb was shown, of such size that it seemed almost incredible they could have grown in so short a time. How bright and smooth they were!

"Mother, *did* you ever see any thing so handsome?" said John, as he called her attention to one after another, as he gently pushed the bright green leaves to one side.

"Shall we not cook some of them, and see if they are as good as they look?" said she.

"Why, mother, they are growing so fast I can hardly think of pulling them just yet; why, you have no idea how they grow." And although there was hardly a weed in the whole cornfield, John gave them another good hoeing, just because he loved to fuss around them and stir the soft mellow ground. Besides the turnips and corn and white beans—by the way, those white beans John raised were like the corn, a little ahead of any thing the people around there had ever heard of before. You see, John wrote to a city seedsman, whom Mr. Merrybanks knew to be a good Christian man, and told him he wanted the best beans that could be found for baking, for a lunch; and even though the seed did cost a little extra, just as soon as these beans would fairly shell they had them boiled and baked. They were dry and mealy, and so sweet that one might imagine it were chestnuts he were eating, instead of boiled and baked beans. I tell you they got to be a great dish in Onionville. They had in their lunch-room small tin dishes that the beans were baked in, and they sold them for the insignificant sum of *three cents* a dish. Why, you would feel

as if you had a pretty fair dinner, after having had just one of these lunches of baked beans. A tiny bit of nice pork was in the center of each little tin dish, and it may be that nobody else knew how to bake them as did the little postmistress, John's mother. Have you had your supper, my friend? Well, I'm glad you haven't, for you will find my subject all the more interesting, doubtless.

I started to tell you that it wasn't corn and beans and turnips alone that grew in that wonderful cornfield. No, sir, 'ee. There were pumpkin pies too. Not that the *pies* grew in the field, but the pumpkins did, and the pies grew in the fingers of the schoolma'am, and weren't they just the thing to finish the lunch after a dish of those baked beans? Mr. Merrybanks always wanted a dish of those baked beans, a pumpkin pie, and a glass of milk for his dinner, and the whole cost only an even dime at the postoffice lunch-room, or Temperance Hotel, as many still persisted in calling it. The doctor took the same bill of fare, only he wanted buttermilk instead of sweet milk. He said it was a little more on the lemonade line for hot weather.

By the way, did I tell you that the doctor had lately taken to going to meeting? Well, he has, and Tom goes too, and behaves himself like a man. Onionville will be proud of Tom some day, see if it isn't. Yes, and the doctor and the minister are getting to be very good friends too. Singular, isn't it? I have been told that the doctor has several times asked the pastor to go to see some of his very sick patients, and that, when they kneeled down and prayed that God might give them life eternal in the world to come, as well as peace and rest in this world, that the doctor shed tears, and asked his friend to pray that he might have more than human wisdom in his work in looking after the comfort and welfare of the sick and dying. The doctor doesn't swear now, I need hardly tell you, and more than one heart was rejoiced to feel that

their family physician was getting to be a man of prayer, rather than one of oaths and blasphemy. Readers, what sort of a man is *your* doctor?

John had some nice garden-tools, and he prided himself some on keeping them nice. Do you ask if he was not the boy that was so woefully careless when we first met him? Well, yes; he was, but you see somehow he got over the most of it. Since he had the experience in the duck business, and got interested in agriculture, he is hardly the same boy. He had a new hoe and spade that he bought with his own money; and as soon as bought, he, by the advice of friend Merrybanks, took them to the grindstone and made them almost as sharp as so many axes; in fact, either one of them would cut wood very well.

"What is the use of that?" said some of the neighbors; "on your sandy and stony soil you will spoil the sharp edge in a few minutes."

"Never you mind their talk," said friend M.; "you and I have got two or three ideas in our heads, haven't we, John?"

The spade and hoe were first warmed by the fire until hot enough to melt tallow, and then all the bright steel was carefully greased. It was now warmed again, until it had taken up all the oil it would hold. The woodwork was now treated to a good painting with crude petroleum, some of which Mr. Merrybanks always kept on hand. One thing more, and the tools were ready for business. With all the care, the edges would get bruised and dulled, and so a nice fine flat file was provided, with a good serviceable handle, and this was to put the edges in order, as often as they needed it. The next thing was to have the tools in some handy place, so one need never hunt for them. My boy, did you ever hunt for the hoe or spade or ax? Well, if you didn't, may be you have heard of folks who did. Sometimes a day's work is almost spoiled for want of a tool that somebody has left out in the weeds. Our

two friends fixed a sort of tall box, open at the bottom and on one side, in which the tools could be quickly hung, on some large stout nails driven into the back on purpose. This box was fastened against the house near the door, so when John went out in the morning he could always pick up the tool he wanted, in an instant. One day, the doctor, as he passed, chanced to get his eye on the bright tools.

"Look here, John, I want to know what makes that spade so bright. Is it because you use it so much, or don't use it at all?"

"Neither, sir. It is because I take good care of it while I use it, and after I put it up. See?" And John spaded it into a flower-bed near by; and as he took it out of the mellow soil, a little dirt adhered to it. "Now you see, that by passing my hand over it, it is so bright the dirt easily slides off; well, after I am done work, or even when I stop for dinner, I just slide my hand over it, and there it is, bright, clean, and free from rust." As John spoke he kept passing his fingers over the bright tool as if he loved it; and I believe it is a fact, that fine workmen are in the habit of getting a sort of love for a favorite tool, if that is the proper word for it. A hammer, a saw, or an ax, is often set store by in this way, especially if the steel be found choice in quality and temper; and such men are very often unjustly termed close or stingy, because they refuse to lend such tools to the average neighbor. I tell you, friends, you have no business asking such a man to lend his tools. John had the true secret of it. The way to have nice tools is to use them carefully, and take care of them. When John worked for any of the farmers around there, he always took his own hoe, and very soon he began to be offered 25 cents more a day than other boys who came with rusty hoes, or no hoe at all.

"Very good," said the doctor, "your reasoning is sound, John, and I hope we may all profit by your example; but I

just stopped to say, that I shall have a little leisure this afternoon, and I will tell you more about the names of those honey-plants, if any of you care to call on Freddie this afternoon, say at 3 o'clock."

As the people of Onionville were getting to be quite a progressive people, and as it was a rather pleasant place to go, quite a little gathering was found at friend Merrybanks' at the appointed time.

When they got there, they found the doctor trying to explain to Mary why the botanical names of plants were given in the dead languages.

"But after all," said Mary, "why do the botanists and doctors use such dreadful words? why not use simple English names when they are so much easier? Why, one day, when I was sick, you told me you would give me some *aqua pura;* and when I saw you pump it out of the well, I knew you meant pure water."

The burst of laughter which followed caused the doctor to look rather confused; but he stooped down and picked up a smooth pine board, and wrote the word *cinq* on it.

"Mary," said he, "what does that word mean?"

"I don't know: I can't even pronounce it."

"That is just what a German, or an Italian, or a Spaniard, or anybody else who knows nothing of French, would say."

The doctor then made a large figure 5 under the word *cinq*, and said, "It means that. Do you know what that is?"

"Five!" exclaimed Mary.

"Now," said the doctor, "were I to show this figure to a German, Hungarian, Swede, Dane, Italian, Spaniard, Frenchman, Bohemian, and a dozen more Europeans, speaking each a different language, all would understand the same thing, for we all use the same characters to represent numbers. And so it is, too, in regard to scientific terms, which are drawn from the Greek and Latin languages; these languages are

used by all scientific men in Europe and America, and hence one can understand the medical and botanical terms used by the learned men of the world. The convenience of this arrangement is beyond all calculation. The drugs I get from France are marked with a Latin name, as a general thing; but if they were labeled in French, what would I know about them?"

"I confess," said Mary, "I showed my lack of information when I was so impatient at these long words. Now I shall study their meaning as hard as Freddie has done, and try to surpass him."

"All right," said Jim, "we all see through it just as plainly as the woman did when the bottom fell out of the tub. Go on with the jaw-breaking words, and we won't object any more, providing you tell us about the horse-meat honey that weighs 12 lbs. to the gallon, and 150 lbs. to the hive at that."

"Horse-meat honey!" echoed a score of voices; "why, Jim, what in the world do you mean?"

"Why, that is the kind they get down in Texas; haven't you read about it in the papers?"

If it hadn't been for a sort of comical look in Jim's face, they might some of them have imagined he had got back into some of his old habits again; but there was no trace of any thing of the sort in his bright face as he answered, "Well, it must be you folks don't read the papers. Look here." And he pulled a Cincinnati evening paper from his pocket, and stood up among the crowd and read this from the convention report:

J. E. Lane [Lay] of Texas exhibited some spring-flowers honey and "horse-meat" honey. The bees will yield 150 pounds to the colony; the "horse-meat" sells readily there, and weighs exactly 12 pounds to the gallon.

"Why, the reporter got it 'meat' instead of 'mint,'" said

friend Merrybanks; "they said 'horsemint honey,' and he got it 'horse*meat*' honey."

All had to look at Jim's paper, and see if it were really so, and then Jim suggested *they* should have a convention then and there, for they could certainly tell mint from meat, even the youngest of them. And they did, and friend Merrybanks was president, John Jones treasurer, and Thomas Snyder secretary.

Jim suggested that nobody in Onionville knew any such person as Thomas Snyder, although everybody knew "Tom, the doctor's boy," quite well.

"Jim, you keep still, or we will put you in some office—see if we don't," said friend M.; and then he called the room to order. Come to think of it, it wasn't any room either, for it was out among the apple-trees, near the pail bee-hives. After Tom was given a sheet of paper, and the preliminaries were arranged, Dr. Snyder was called upon to take up the opening topic, "*Monarda punctata*."

At this point Jim whispered to the schoolma'am, "Horse meat;" but the president shook his finger at him in a threatening way, and he at once moved away from the schoolma'am, and sat upright and drew his face down in a very solemn and sedate manner. Freddie had provided the doctor with a sprig of the plant; and as he rose he bowed, first to the president, then to the audience.

"Mr. President, ladies, and gentlemen. I am asked to tell you what I can about this plant, *Monarda punctata*. It is one of the mint family. I need hardly tell you, for its common name is horsemint." Here Jim made his mouth go as if he were saying "meat," although no sound came from his lips, at which movement the president, with a knowing look, began jotting down something on a piece of paper. The doctor resumed, "All mints have square stalks, and you will notice, first, that the stalk of this plant is square."

Just here the schoolma'am begged to ask of the gentleman who had the floor, whether it were also true that all plants with square stalks are necessarily mints.

"They are not, madam. *Scrofularia nodosa*—" Here Freddie put in a great big whisper, "Simpson plant;" but the president rapped on the table, and declared the doctor had the floor, and that he would be pleased to have master Freddie stand up and enlighten them after the doctor had got through.

"Well, as I was saying," resumed the doctor, "*Scrofularia nodosa*, and many other plants, have square stalks, but are not mints. The mints are known by their square stalks, and also by the great quantity of essential oils that most of them contain. I believe they are all good honey-plants. The one I hold here in my hand is called *Monarda*, from the name of the great Spanish botanist who first called attention to it, and *punctata*, because the flowerets are dotted thickly with round black spots so as to give it a look almost as if it were punctured with a great many pinholes." Here the doctor passed bits of the plants around among the audience, that each one might see the dotted or punctured appearance. I think we will take a look too, boys and girls, and so here I give you a picture of the renowned

HORSEMINT OF TEXAS.

Just at this stage of proceedings Bob came rushing on the

scene, with a branch of a tree in his hand, that had something attached to it along the stems of the branches, looking like wool, only the wool seemed alive, as it waved in a strange way backward and forward. The leaves of this branch had also some sticky substance on them, and as Bob waved it over his head and shouted, "Here's your honey-dew," the convention showed signs of wanting to break up. The president, however, made them come to order and adjourn in a regular way, deciding to call another meeting in two weeks, and then all hands noticed, for the first time, that the bees from the apiary were going in a steady stream toward a certain piece of woods. Others were coming in laden, and falling around the entrance, very much as they do at daylight during the height of a heavy basswood flow.

"Well, you just better believe they are getting honey," said Bob; "why, every tree in the woods, almost, is roaring like a bee-tree. Look at it on these leaves, and see what I have got in my hat."

Suiting the actions to the words, Bob took off his hat, but didn't find any honey in it.

"Here it is," said Jim; and he picked a couple of large beech leaves out of his hair; but the honey had run out from between them, and stuck his uncombed hair together until they all laughed.

"Sweet, a'n't ye, Bob?" said Jim.

"Now, you just look here; next time I find any thing you want to see, I will just let you find it out yourself, see if I don't." But the schoolma'am assured him he had given them some valuable facts, and that a vote of thanks was due him. This they gave him, and then all hands, after having examined the honey, voted to go to the woods and see it; and the doctor promised to read them something from a book, in regard to the strange insects that look like wool, and make honey.

Oh, yes! I think I must tell you just one thing more. Just as they got over the fence to go into the woods, and the older ones caught up, they heard the children teasing Jim to tell something over again.

"Yes, do, Jim, please. O father! you just ought to hear what Jim says a man said when he drove up to a tavern, and wanted the boy to take care of his horse. Do, Jim, just tell it once more." It was Freddie who was the speaker.

"Let us hear what the man said to the boy, Jim, if it isn't any thing bad."

"Nothing bad at all, sir," said Jim with a slightly sober look, "or I wouldn't be telling it. It was only this: 'Boy! extricate this quadruped from the vehicle; stabulate him, and donate him an adequate supply of nutritious aliment; and when the great aurora of morn shall again illuminate the oriental horizon, I will award you a pecuniary compensation for your amiable hospitality.'"

"Did the boy understand?"

"I believe," said Jim, "that he went into the house and told the landlord there was a Dutchman out there."

John jumped and swung his hat, and gave three cheers for honey in October, and all the rest joined in, and now they are gone. Good-by, little friends.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.—Eccl. 9:10.

SURE enough, the aphides were found by the millions, and they were on the beech-trees, and on them only. Where they appeared, the limbs of the trees were white with the downy wool, and the foliage underneath them was covered with the sticky substance, as well as the ground underneath, where it had mildewed and turned black, giving the dead leaves a sort of dismal appearance of the blackness of death and decay, rather than of bright visions of honey or nectar.

"Why, they are horrid nasty creatures," said Mary, "and they spoil the trees and every thing near them."

"Wait a bit," said the doctor, "and don't be in a hurry to pass judgment."

It was observed, that as long as the limb of the tree was untouched, and the tree undisturbed, the insects fed quietly, and no waving movement was noticed, as shown by those Bob brought on the limb. At any slight jar, however (they were almost as sensitive as bees to any disturbance), they all began to elevate their bodies, and wave their "plumes." The doctor cut off a branch, and they all sat down in a sunny spot where they could see clearly, and began to study aphides.

"Why, they are just nasty-looking worms down under their feathers," again commenced Mary; but the doctor observed again,—

"Mary, did you never call young bees 'nasty-looking worms,' or hear of anybody else so doing?"

"Oh!" said John, "don't you remember, Tom, the man who came to see about his bees, who said the combs were so full of worms that were scattered over it, just like beads?"

"Yes," said Tom, "and we could hardly make him believe they were young bees, and would build up his colony instead of ruining it."

"Why, I think young bees are pretty," said Mary, and Freddie said the same.

"Well, now, you see it all depends upon our acquaintance with these little creatures," said the doctor. "If we knew as much about these, and were just as used to them as we are to young bees, we might find them pretty instead of repulsive."

As they pushed open the cluster, great numbers of little worms, or larvæ, were seen, of all sizes, and they also saw on the older insects little drops of honey oozing from a pair of little tubes; and while they looked, a bee hovered near and finally settled and sucked up the nectar, with as little hesitation as he would have made in taking it from a clover-head.

"Well, I can't help it," said Mary, "but it does look repulsive. I don't want any of that honey, I am sure."

"I beg your pardon, Mary," said friend Merrybanks, "but do you think it repulsive to see cows milked? and when you see it done, do you feel like saying you don't want any of the milk?"

"Oh! there is one with wings. It is a queen, it is a queen," said Freddie; but Jim just here came up with a bush which he held before them, saying,—

"What do you think of that, Master Freddie? Don't you see, mine are almost all queens?" All looked, and, sure enough, some of them had wings not very much unlike winged ants, but none present could explain it.

"Who is going to be our entomologist, and explain these things to us?" said the doctor. "If we can't do any better, we can take them down to my office, and I will find a book that will explain it a little, I am pretty sure."

All hands agreed; and as it was not a great way off, they started. As they came into the little town, carrying the

branches, everybody knew, of course, that something was up, and so they followed along, looking at the queer insects, until the doctor had the greater part of Onionville for his audience. As they passed the parsonage on the way, the minister was asked to join in with them, and he, too, brought along a cyclopedia, to help add to the fund of knowledge about aphides. The doctor found his book, and all sat down on the porch to listen. He began, and read as follows:—

"*Aphidæ*, Leach, or Aphis family.—This family comprises *Hemiptera homoptera*—"

At this point Jim was heard to repeat, in a very loud whisper, "Hemiptera homoptera," with a knowing look at Freddie at the same time. The doctor paused and good-naturedly remarked,—

"Jim, it seems to me we have a promise of having an etymologist among us soon, if we *don't* have an entomologist; and if Freddie should get into a tight place in his hard names, you can take hold and help him out."

"May I here suggest," said John's father, "that our pastor give us the meaning of the words he has just used, as well as the ones he read out of that book? There are children here, besides some older ones like myself, who would like to have things made very plain."

You see, our friends had not quite gotten over the atmosphere of the convention of an hour before, even if it had been adjourned; and as all asked to have the hard words explained, the minister arose smilingly, and spoke as follows:

"You will excuse me for being brief, I know, friends, for we are most of us in a hurry to know about the insects that are now expressing their displeasure by waving to and fro on the branches. Etymology treats of the history of words and grammatical forms, while entomology treats of insects, their shape, habits, etc. This latter branch of science, however, borders closely on several others, as zoology, for instance; and

if I mistake not, it is a book on zoology the doctor is reading from."

"Tenney's *Manual of Zoology*," replied the doctor.

"Thanks. Well, now for the words *hemiptera homoptera*. These words refer to those insects in which the wing-covers are of one texture throughout, and do not overlap when shut; as, for instance, the harvest-flies and these plant-lice. It will be well to remember, that *ptera*, or *pteron*, is the Greek for a wing or feather. Moreover, the word *aphides* is pronounced in three syllables, as if spelled *af-i-deez*, just as the doctor showed you a while ago. And now if he will be so kind as to commence again, we shall have a better understanding, perhaps, of what we are going to hear."

At this the doctor commenced again, and read:

Aphidæ—Leach, or Aphis family.—This family comprises *hemiptera homoptera*, which have the body short, and furnished at the hind extremity with two little tubes, or pores, from which exude minute drops of a very sweet fluid. Their upper wings are much longer than the body, about twice as large as the lower ones, nearly triangular, and, when at rest, almost vertical. Aphides, or plant-lice, inhabit all kinds of plants, the leaves and softer portions being often completely covered with them. The young are hatched in the spring, and soon come to maturity; and, what is remarkable, the whole brood consists of wingless females; and, what is still more remarkable, these females bring forth living young, each female producing fifteen or twenty in a day. These young are also wingless females, and at maturity bring forth living young, which are also all wingless females, and in their turn bring forth living young; and in this way brood after brood is produced, even to the fourteenth generation, in a single season, and this without the appearance of a single male. But the last brood in autumn contains both males and females, which at length have wings, pair, stock the plants with eggs, and then perish. Reaumur has proven that a single aphis in five generations may become the progenitor of about six thousand millions of descendants. Wherever plant-lice abound, ants collect to feed upon the honey-like fluid produced by them; and the most friendly relations exist between these two kinds of insects. The ants even caress the plant-lice with their antennæ, apparently soliciting them to give out the sweet fluid, and the plant-lice yield to their solicitation; and a single aphis has

been known to give in succession a drop to each of a number of ants waiting to receive it! In return, the ants take the kindest care of the plant-lice, warding off or removing any thing that may be injurious to them. Plant-lice are kept in check by beetles called lady-bugs. The genus *Eriosma* contains downy plant-lice, or those which have a sort of woolly or cottony covering.

After he had finished, the children wanted the book; and as they read, they examined the insects and took down the points, statement by statement, and verified them with their own eyes.

"How wonderful are thy works, O Lord! in wisdom hast thou made them all."

It was the minister who repeated the text, for he was bending over them and listening to their talk.

By request, the minister now read as follows from the *Library of Universal Knowledge:*

Aphis—a genus of insects belonging to the order *hemiptera*, sub-order *homoptera* — the type of a family called *aphidii*. They are small insects, living by sucking the juices of plants, upon which they may be seen congregated in immense numbers, often doing serious injury, causing the distortion of leaves, and even the blight and decay of the plant. The woolly aphis, or American blight (*A. lanigera; eriosma mali* of Leach), is sometimes very injurious to apple-trees; and when once it has found its way into a garden or orchard it is very difficult of removal. It is a minute insect, "covered with a long cotton-like wool, transpiring from the pores of its body" — "a cottony excretion" — in which it differs from the ordinary aphides, and takes its place in the chinks and rugosities of the bark, multiplying rapidly, extracting the sap, causing diseased excrescences, and, ultimately, the destruction of the tree. It was first observed in England in 1787; but it is uncertain if it was, as has been supposed, accidentally brought from America. The hop-fly (*A. humuli*) and the aphis of the turnip and cabbage (*A. brassicæ*), have sometimes caused the destruction of entire crops. The price of hops varies from one year to another, very much according to the numbers in which "the fly" has appeared. The potato aphis (*A. vastator*) has been represented as the cause of the potato disease; but this opinion has few supporters. The aphides of the rose (*A. rosæ*) and of the bean (*A. fabæ*) are among the most familiarly known. Every one must have observed the leaves of trees and shrubs deformed by red convexities. In the hollows of the un-

der side of these, aphides have their habitation, and there they find their food. The exhausted leaf at last curls up. Most of the species are green; but the aphis of the bean is black. They are generally called plant-lice. They have a proboscis (*haustellum*) by which they pierce and suck plants; and at the extremity of the abdomen, two horn-like processes, from which exude frequent small drops of a saccharine fluid called "honey-dew," a favorite food of ants. It has been seen even to fall in a kind of shower from trees much covered with aphides. The legs of aphides are long, and they move slowly and awkwardly by them. The greater number of them never have wings. It is in the autumn that perfect-winged insects generally appear. From the pairing of these result eggs, which produce female aphides in the following spring, and successive generations of wingless aphides are produced in a viviparous manner without impregnation throughout the summer, after which winged aphides again appear. Their increase is restrained, not only by birds, but by insects which feed on them. A family of coleopterous insects, to which the genus *coccinella*, or lady-birds, belongs, has received, on this account, the name of *aphidiphagi*, or aphis-eaters. There are also certain minute hymenopterous insects, which destroy them in great numbers by depositing their eggs in them. The larva feeds upon the living aphis, out of which it at last eats its way, leaving a mere desiccated skin.

At its conclusion friend Merrybanks remarked, "We are all very much obliged indeed for this additional information, especially in regard to the damage the aphides do to the trees. Why, I had been already planning how we might select the most promising variety, and keep them as an adjunct to the apiary, and, may be, develop a superior strain, just as they do Jersey cows and the like, and I declare I have half a mind to go into it yet."

"Oh, don't!" said Mary; "don't you remember the book says they carry blight and death wherever they go? I am sure every thing looked blighted where we found them. Even the grass and leaves on the ground looked blue and dismal and —*dusty!* and that is just what they are—so, there!"

Here the doctor added that he was inclined to agree with Mary that the insects seemed to carry rather too much devas-

tation and death with them to promise much; but still, as people often get prejudices that time shows to have been unfounded, it might be well to avoid deciding hastily.

"But you know the book said they kill apple-trees, and that would spoil the cider," said Jim; but friend M. said that would be no loss.

John sided with friend M., as he usually did, and they two started off to find more cyclopedias, and began considering how they could so protect the "woolly aphis" that they might go on with their researches.

"If we only knew as much about them as we do about our bees," said John, "wouldn't it be easy going ahead?"

"If we only knew as much about *all* kinds of insect and vegetable life as we do about bees, we should be a deal wiser than we are now," interposed Tom.

"Oh! that reminds me," said Mr. M., "that there is a man up near Berryville who has for many years been studying plums —"

"Plums!" interposed Freddie, "I shouldn't think there is much to study about plums."

"Well, if you will go with me some time and see him, I think you will find there are a few things," said his father. "He has a large orchard, all plum-trees, and I forget how many kinds there are, but there are a dozen or twenty. The trees are so smooth and glossy, and so symmetrical and thrifty, you would hardly think of calling them plum-trees. He not only studies the tops, leaves, and blossoms, but he gets down and digs all about the roots; and woe betide the worm that thinks he can get into one of the trees and not be found out. He has a sort of wheelbarrow that he bumps the trees with, and catches the curculio; and the fruit is so large and fair that a little girl who was there called them 'red peaches.' When I saw them, many of the trees were bending with fruit; and

how much do you guess he was offered for them in the city, not long ago?"

There was a deal of guessing, but none came high enough.

"He was offered *seven dollars a bushel* for the best of them, to put in little baskets of assortments of fancy fruit."

"I am glad to hear it," said the doctor, "for I think it no more than right that those who give their whole attention to developing any branch of rural industry should be rewarded, and *well* rewarded."

That night John was a little inclined to have the plum fever, as he questioned friend M. further; but his mother bade him do a few things, and do them well, rather than to attempt too many things.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.—JOHN 17:17.

CONCLUSION.

DEAR friends, I have finished my book. I presume that even the children, most of them, know that Merrybanks is a fictitious character; or, in other words, that there never was any such person. I presume these children know, too, that many of their books, even their Sunday-school books, contain "made-up" stories, as they are sometimes called. The things contained in them are true, but the names of the people, and the incidents, or things that happened, are, most of them, put together so as to form a book or story. Many of the best books we have are of this class, although there are different opinions in regard to them.

Most of the things stated in Merrybanks were true in substance, and so many of you could hardly tell what I meant to be actual facts and what were not. For instance, one friend wondered that all my characters in that story improved and got good so fast. Well, friends, I did think, sometimes, that, to have my story look life-like, there ought to be more bad in it; but to tell the truth, I could not bear to make John and Mary, and Tom the doctor's boy, and the rest of them, do bad things. Since writing so long about them, I have almost learned to love them as if they were a reality; and if I have got to tell bad things about them to make my story real and life-like, I shall not tell any thing about them at all. Good-bye, John, Mary, Bob, Freddie, and Jim. Good-bye, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, the doctor, and dear old friend Merrybanks, who

had so much trouble at first, but who has turned out so good and strong at last. If I made you all better in my little story, God knows it was because I did truly "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and I *know* he will help me to find something good out of all the real life he will give me before I die.

Should any of the friends desire to follow the subject of bee culture further, and go more into the minutiæ than it has been given here, we would refer them to the A B C of Bee Culture; if they care to go into the matter of gardening and rural industries, we would direct them to the A B C of Potato Culture, by T. B. Terry, and the new book now in press, entitled, What to Do, and How to Be Happy While Doing It. If they feel interested more in the subject of domesticating fish, and raising them for food, we refer them to the book above mentioned, and also to the A B C of Carp Culture. If it happens that you feel already acquainted with the author of this little book, and therefore particularly prefer his own writings, you are referred to GLEANINGS IN BEE CULTURE AND HOME INTERESTS, a semi-monthly periodical from which this little work was taken. The only complete books he has written are the A B C of Bee Culture, and What to Do and How to Be Happy While Doing It. This latter work touches on almost all departments of rural industries — bees, poultry, carp, gardening, and fruit culture, but more especially the two latter. A. I. ROOT.

Medina, O., Sept. 21, 1887.

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